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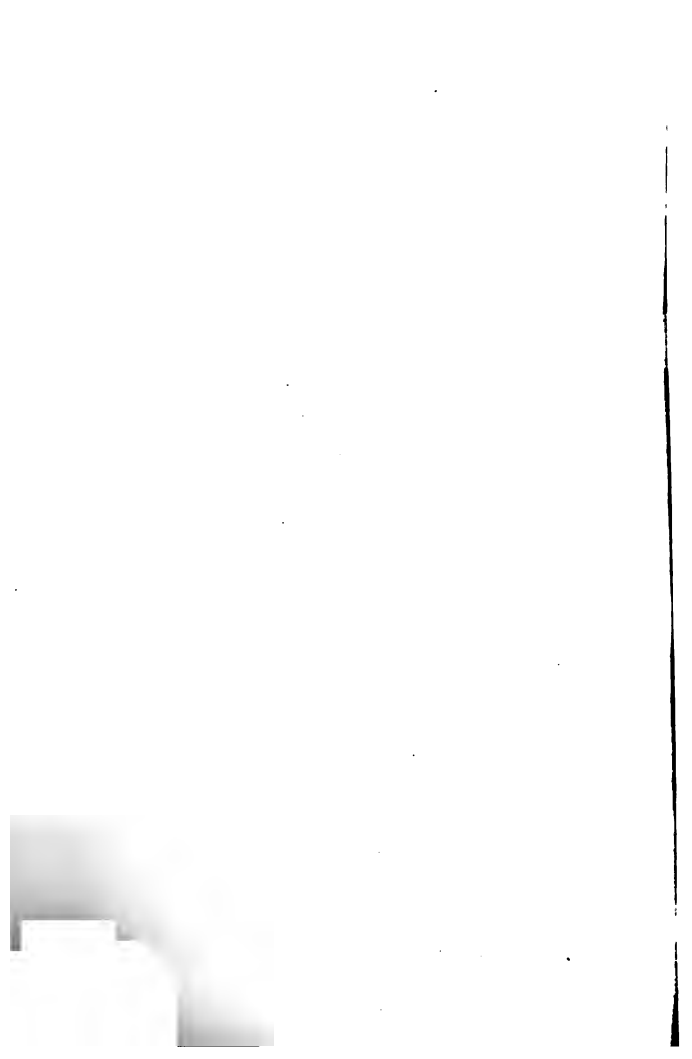
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**FIRST
LESSONS IN ANCIENT HISTORY.**

FIRST LESSONS
IN
ANCIENT HISTORY

FOR YOUNG PEOPLE.

BY THE
REV. T. WOOLMER,
Author of "Child Training."



LONDON:
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PREFACE.

THE design of the following work is to assist those students, whose time and means of instruction are limited ; and to allure young persons, who may be receiving their education at school or elsewhere, to the pursuit of a study, which is an almost indispensable part of scholastic training.

Hence, while others have produced most elaborate and complete treatises on Ancient History, the author has rather aimed at an interesting narrative of the principal and most striking facts ; which might not, on the one hand, weary by its length, nor, on the other hand, prove useless, from the scantiness of its details. He has intended his work to be entirely of an *introductory* character.

It is possible that there may appear occasional discrepancies in the chronology. But

every scholar knows how difficult it is to fix the dates of early nations with accuracy. And it is only necessary to add, that the writer has consulted and followed those historians, whose authority can be most relied upon. Wherever Scripture has spoken with certainty, its testimony has been regarded as paramount. Of other volumes, particular deference has been paid to Dr. Taylor's *Manual of Ancient History*.

Since this work first appeared, it has been extensively used, and with advantage, in schools and by private tutors. The present issue contains some few additions to the chronological tables, but is in other respects unaltered.

In speaking of Ancient History, it is customary to refer to the five great Empires of Assyria, Babylonia, Persia, Greece, and Rome. And, in pursuing this study, it appears to be the easiest course, to consider the history of each of these Empires separately, and in its proper order. But as Egypt, one of the oldest states in the world, in the time of its greatest wealth and power belonged to none of these Empires, and yet an acquaintance with its history is very necessary to the student,—Egyptian history will also occupy some portion of the following pages.

ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA.

THE most ancient empire in the world was the Assyrian ; which occupied that part of Asia, surrounding the rivers Tigris and Euphrates. The *exact* period, when this empire was founded, it is impossible to tell ; as the only data, by which its first historians were furnished with details respecting its origin, were such as they gathered from tradition—at all times a doubtful source, and in the present instance particularly so ; as is evident from the glaring and irreconcilable contradictions, which their various works present.

It is probable, however, that if we fix the date of its commencement about B.C. 2200, or about one hundred and fifty years after the Deluge, we shall not be very far wrong ;

as Scripture seems to speak of its foundation at this period by Nimrod, the great grandson of Noah. This Nimrod "was a mighty hunter before the Lord : wherefore it is said, Even as Nimrod the mighty hunter before the Lord. And the beginning of his kingdom was Babel, and Erech, and Accad, and Calneh, in the land of Shinar. Out of that land went forth Asshur," (or as the marginal reading has it—and here the marginal reading is generally allowed to be more correct than the other—" *he went out of that land into Assyria,*") "and builded Nineveh." (Gen. x. 8—11.) In the book of Micah's Prophecies, Assyria is called "the land of Nimrod." "And they shall waste the land of Assyria with the sword, and the *land of Nimrod* in the entrances thereof: thus shall he deliver us from the Assyrian, when he cometh into our land, and when he treadeth within our borders." (Micah v. 6.)

Herodotus, the most celebrated and correct of the Grecian historians, tells us, that Nineveh was built by Ninus; so that the Ninus of profane history is the same with the Nimrod of Scripture. He was also called Belus, or Bel; and, after his death,

was one of the principal objects of idolatrous worship among the Assyrians and Babylonians. The city, which he built and called after his own name, was one of the largest and most magnificent of which history gives us any record. Jonah says of it: "Nineveh was an exceeding great city, of three days' journey," (Jonah iii. 3,) or sixty miles round. Its walls were one hundred feet high; and so thick, that three chariots might be driven abreast upon the top of them. These walls were fortified with fifteen hundred towers, each two hundred feet high.

The successors of Nimrod, or Ninus, appear to have been called after himself for many generations, though but very little is known of them. The first, concerning whom history has any authentic record, married the celebrated Semiramis, wife of one of his officers. He was so fond of this woman, that he allowed her to undertake the complete administration of the affairs of the empire; and, in a short time, consented that he himself should be deposed, and that Semiramis should reign in his stead. Of this, however, he soon had cause to repent; since, fearing that she was not secure while her husband

lived, she ordered him to be put to death.* To strengthen her cause, she enlarged and beautified Babylon; making it at once the glory of its inhabitants, and the terror of their enemies.

The accounts which are given us of this celebrated city are almost incredible; but, making allowance for great exaggerations, it appears from the united testimony of all historians, that it far exceeded all other cities in wealth, grandeur, and magnificence. It was built in the midst of a soil, which frequently yielded three hundred-fold, and was a source of unfailing luxuries to its inhabitants. Its walls, which formed an exact square, sixty miles in compass, were three hundred and fifty feet in height, and eighty-seven feet thick, and contained one hundred gates of solid brass. The city was divided into fifty streets, every one of which was fifteen miles long, running entirely from one side of the city to the other. These streets crossed each other at right angles, and formed

* Some historians dispute this account, and affirm that Ninus died a natural death a few years after his marriage with Semiramis, and then left her in quiet possession of the throne.

six hundred and seventy-six squares; each square being two and a quarter miles in circumference. There were two royal palaces, one of which was three and three quarter miles round, and the other just double the size. In the latter of these were the famous hanging gardens, so constructed as to rise by means of terraces, one above another, to the height of three hundred and fifty feet; at which elevation the largest trees and choicest plants flourished most luxuriantly. These hanging gardens were made by Nebuchadnezzar to gratify his wife, who was passionately fond of woodland scenery.

One of the most remarkable edifices in the city was the temple of Belus, whose tower is supposed to have been that famous tower of Babel, from which Babylon derives its name; and at the building of which, that wonderful judgment of God, called the "confusion of tongues," took place. This tower, which was six hundred and sixty feet high, was used as an observatory, and was of the utmost advantage to the Babylonian astronomers. The temple of Belus was so rich, that Xerxes is said to have found in it, and robbed it of, £21,000,000.

As Babylon was built upon the Euphrates,

and that river regularly overflowed its banks, at such times greatly damaging the city and neighbouring country, one of its monarchs constructed an immense lake, one hundred and sixty miles round, and thirty-five feet deep, into which the waters of the Euphrates might drain ; and which might also serve as a reservoir in the dry season, when its waters could be let out over the adjacent territory.

Yet of this city, with all its stupendous works of art, no vestige now remains except a heap of undistinguishable ruins—looking more like a tract of rugged and broken country, than a fallen city. Gradually, after its overthrow, Babylon became forsaken ; until at last it served as a hunting-park to the kings of Persia. It now affords dens and lurking-places to all kinds of wild animals. Beasts of prey, and venomous reptiles have succeeded to the former lords of the place ; and travellers tell us, that the words of Scripture have been literally fulfilled : “ And Babylon, the glory of kingdoms, the beauty of the Chaldees’ excellency, shall be as when God overthrew Sodom and Gomorrah. It shall never be inhabited, neither shall it be dwelt in from generation to generation ;

neither shall the Arabian pitch tent there; neither shall the shepherds make their fold there. But wild beasts of the deserts shall lie there; and their houses shall be full of doleful creatures; and owls shall dwell there, and satyrs shall dance there. And the wild beasts of the islands shall cry in their desolate houses, and dragons in their pleasant palaces. I will also make it a possession for the bittern, and pools of water; and I will sweep it with the besom of destruction, saith the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah xiii. 19—22; xiv. 23.)

Though several succeeding sovereigns added greatly to the beauty and strength of Babylon, it was chiefly indebted for its arrangement and magnificence to Semiramis; who, according to Rollin, employed two millions of men in enlarging and embellishing it. Having accomplished this work, she afterwards made a tour through her empire—everywhere leaving monuments of her wealth and skill—and then conducted large armies into Ethiopia and India, both of which countries she expected to conquer; but being defeated and wounded in India, she returned home, and was soon after succeeded in the empire by her son Ninyas.

Ninyas was an indolent and dissipated monarch, wholly given up to sensual pleasures, and entrusting the government of his empire entirely to his ministers. His successors for many generations followed his base example; and the Assyrian power gradually declined.

The next king, whose name is worthy of record, because of his attempts to re-establish the Assyrian monarchy, was Pul, who invaded the kingdom of Israel, and was bought off by Menahem, the reigning sovereign, for one thousand talents of silver, B.C. 771. This Pul is supposed by some to be the king of Nineveh, who repented, with all his people, at the preaching of Jonah.

The fortieth and last king of Assyria, before the empire was divided, was Sardanapalus. But little, except the manner of his death, is accurately known respecting him. He appears, however, to have been at first an active conqueror, but afterwards sank into an idle and luxurious prince. A conspiracy was therefore formed against him, and he was besieged in Nineveh by the Babylonians and Medes; when, seeing no possible chance of escape from his enemies.

he collected his immense treasures into one mighty heap, and setting fire to the whole, he threw himself, with his family and servants, into the flames, and there perished, B.C. 747.

On the death of Sardanapalus, Nabonassar, called in Scripture Baladan, became king of Babylon; and Tiglath Pileser, under the name of Ninus the Second, reigned in Nineveh. It was the latter, who, at the earnest request of Ahaz, king of Judah, "went up against Damascus, and took it, and carried the people of it captive, and slew" their king, (2 Kings xvi. 9,) B.C. 740.

Shalmaneser was the next monarch. He besieged Samaria, the capital of the kingdom of Israel, and took it after a siege of three years, B.C. 721. He led the Ten Tribes into captivity, filling their cities with his own people, and expecting by this policy—a very common practice in those times—to strengthen and establish his power.

Shalmaneser was succeeded by his son Sennacherib, whose name is connected in Holy Writ with one of the most terrible of all God's judgments. He invaded Egypt; and went up with a large army against

Hezekiah, king of Judah, B.C. 713; but while his mouth was yet full of threats against Judah, and of blasphemies against God, "the angel of the Lord went out and smote in the camp of the Assyrians an hundred four score and five thousand : and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses." (2 Kings xix. 35.)

"Like the leaves of the forest when summer is green,
That host with their banners at sunset were seen ;
Like the leaves of the forest when autumn hath
blown,
That host on the morrow lay withered and strown."

"So Sennacherib, king of Assyria, departed, and went and returned, and dwelt at Nineveh," his capital; where, stung with disgrace, he treated his subjects so cruelly, that he was shortly after slain by his two eldest sons; and Esarhaddon, his third son, reigned in his stead.

Esarhaddon was a prosperous prince; and, having reigned thirty-nine years, was succeeded by his son Nebuchadnezzar—a name, which was afterwards common to the kings of Babylon. He was succeeded by Saracus, who was the last king of Nineveh. Being an idle and effeminate prince, his capital

was besieged and taken, and he himself slain, B.C. 606. After this Nineveh was known no more. Its name and its place were alike blotted out from the history of nations; for God had denounced the same kind of judgment upon it for its wickedness, which He denounced upon Babylon: "I will make Nineveh a desolation, and dry like a wilderness. And flocks shall lie down in the midst of her, all the beasts of the nations." (Zephaniah ii. 13, 14.)

It was before mentioned, that when Sardanapalus perished, and Nineveh was taken, the Assyrian empire was divided; Tiglath Pileser usurping the sovereignty of Nineveh, and Nabonassar that of Babylon. Nabonassar belonged to the tribe of the Chaldees; and it is from him that the *Nabonassarean epoch* receives its name. The Chaldees, who were at first wandering tribes like the Arabs, appear to have been employed by the Assyrian monarchs as *mercenary soldiers*; and, in order to keep their country more fully in subjection, they stationed these Chaldean soldiers in the vicinity of Babylon; whose

inhabitants were exceedingly jealous of the superiority of Nineveh, and frequently rebelled. In the course of time, the Chaldeans became amalgamated with the Babylonians, and then assisted that city in throwing off the Assyrian yoke. This occurred in the year B.C. 747, the time when Nabonassar became king.

His son, Merodach Baladan, was the prince, who sent ambassadors to Hezekiah to congratulate him upon his recovery from a severe sickness; on which occasion, Hezekiah, in the pride of his heart, showed them the wealth of his country and all his own treasures; and then received a message from God, that because he had done this, there was a day coming when all this wealth should be carried away to Babylon; which was literally fulfilled about one hundred and twenty-five years after.

Several princes succeeded to Merodach Baladan, of whom history furnishes no particular account: but it appears, that, during the reign of the last of these, Babylon was again conquered by the king of Nineveh, and became annexed to his dominions; until Nabopolassar, a Babylonian by birth, and a general in his army, usurped the sovereignty

of Babylon, and laid siege to Nineveh ; which, with the help of the Medes, he took and utterly destroyed,—thus leaving Babylon without a rival, B.C. 606.

Nabopolassar was succeeded by his son Nebuchadnezzar, surnamed the Great. He raised the empire to its highest pitch of glory ; gaining a great victory over the Egyptians, and conquering many neighbouring nations. During the time that he was engaged in foreign wars, his queen erected some of the most splendid edifices in Babylon. Nebuchadnezzar conquered Judah, and brought many of its princes, with the prophet Daniel, captive into his own country. Some years after this the Jews rebelled ; and Nebuchadnezzar again invaded their territory with a numerous army, took and plundered Jerusalem, and carried away with him so many of the inhabitants of the country, that, it is said, “none remained, save the poorest sort of the people of the land.” (2 Kings xxiv. 14.)

Thus ended the kingdom of Judah, B.C. 588, and one hundred and thirty-three years after the subversion of the kingdom of Israel by Shalmaneser.

Nebuchadnezzar also laid siege to Tyre, the capital of Phœnicia, which he took after a siege of thirteen years; during which time, his army suffered such incredible hardships, that Ezekiel says: "Every head was made bald, and every shoulder was peeled." (Ezekiel xxix. 18.) Their heads became bald by so constantly wearing their helmets, and their shoulders bruised and peeled by carrying baskets of earth to the fortifications, and wood with other materials to build the towers.

It was after all these events had taken place, that Nebuchadnezzar set up his golden image in the plains of Dura. And towards the latter part of his reign, while congratulating himself upon the great Babylon, which he had built "by the might of his power and for the honour of his majesty," his reason was taken from him; "and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws." (Daniel iv. 33.) It is supposed by some, that he lived several years after his restoration: but the point is a disputed one.

Belshazzar—or *the mighty prince of Bel*, as the word means—was the grandson of Nebuchadnezzar. He reigned seventeen years, abandoning himself to the most unbounded sensuality and luxury; and trusting to the great strength and vast fortifications of his city for security: but having provoked the hostility of the Medes, Darius, the king of that people, accompanied by Cyrus, his nephew, advanced with a large army, and laid siege to Babylon. Despising his enemies, and scorning all their attacks, and wishing to show how little he cared for them, “Belshazzar the king made a great feast to a thousand of his lords, and drank wine before the thousand.” (Daniel v. 1.) But in the very midst of their riot and debauchery, and while in the act of profaning the sacred vessels which had belonged to the temple at Jerusalem, the awful fingers were seen, the mysterious writing was read—“MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN”—and scarcely had its meaning been told, ere the soldiers of Cyrus appeared. Cyrus had introduced them into the city by turning the course of the river, and leading them up its waterless channel. Hidden by

the darkness themselves, but guided by the lights that gleamed from the chambers of revelry, the Medes penetrated into the very heart of the city, and attacked the guards before the palace. The guests within, startled by the clash of arms and the screams of the dying, flung open the gates to ascertain the cause of the tumult, and thus gave admission to the enemy. "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain;" (Daniel v. 30;) and with him terminated the empire of Babylon, B.C. 538.

Though the Babylonians were guilty of the most abominable idolatries, and have, perhaps, never been surpassed in wickedness by any nation, their knowledge of the arts and sciences was very extensive. Some of their rings and carved stones, which are now in the British Museum, prove their superiority as engravers. Their manufactures were celebrated throughout the world—a Babylonish garment being of the very richest character. Their astronomical calculations were very correct, and were consulted by the astronomers of every other nation.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE
OF THE MOST REMARKABLE EVENTS IN THE
HISTORY OF ASSYRIA AND BABYLONIA.*

B. C.

- 2200 Foundation of the Assyrian empire by
Nimrod.
- 1250 Semiramis enlarges and beautifies Ba-
bylon ; and spreads her conquests.
- 800 Probable period, when Jonah the
prophet was sent by God to threaten
Nineveh with destruction.
- 771 Pul invades the kingdom of Israel.
- 747 Death of Sardanapalus. Division of
the Assyrian empire. Tiglath Pileser
becomes king of Nineveh ; and Na-
bonassar becomes king of Babylon.
The *Nabonassarean Era* commences.
- 740 Siege and conquest of Damascus.
- 721 Shalmaneser, king of Nineveh, carries
away into captivity the Ten Tribes
of Israel.

* It must be understood, that some of the dates given in this, and the following Tables, are only *supposed dates*—there being no authority, which fixes them with accuracy.

- 713 Destruction of Sennacherib's army.
606 Nineveh taken and destroyed by the
Medes and Babylonians.
588 Nebuchadnezzar takes Jerusalem, and
puts an end to the kingdom of
Judah.
538 Babylon taken by Cyrus. Belshazzar
the king is slain ; and the Babylo-
nian empire is overthrown.
-

EGYPT.

EGYPT, which has been called "the queen of nations, and the mother of the arts and sciences," is situated in the north-eastern part of Africa ; bounded on the east by the Red Sea, and on the north by the Mediterranean. It occupies a tract of country about five hundred miles in length, and from twenty to fifty miles in breadth ; though towards the north the breadth is much greater.

It was formerly divided into three parts—Upper, Middle, and Lower ; the Lower being frequently known by the name of the Delta,* because of its resemblance in shape to that letter. The whole country is well watered by the Nile, which enters Upper Egypt from the south ; and, passing along in almost a

* Delta is the fourth letter of the Greek alphabet, and is written thus Δ . The territory of Lower Egypt is in this form.

straight course, empties itself by several mouths into the Mediterranean Sea. Two chains of mountains run parallel with the river; one being on the east, and the other on the west, of it, and affording a great protection to the country. Egypt is the valley enclosed between them. Rain is almost unknown in Egypt: but, to compensate for its loss, the Nile annually overflows its banks; which produces so great a fertility of soil, that two crops are generally grown in the year. During the time of this inundation, which is very gradual, and which covers the whole of the valley, the inhabitants retire to the mountains or some elevated spot, and there remain till it has subsided.

Egypt was formerly remarkable for its great population, and for its large number of fortified cities. The number of its cities has been stated at twenty thousand; but this is doubtless an exaggeration. The principal of them were Thebes, Memphis, and Heliopolis. There is no authentic account, when or by whom the two former were built; but the latter is supposed to be the same as Raamses, or Rameses, one of the treasure-cities, which the children of Israel built for Pharaoh.

Thebes was for a long time considered to be the wonder of the world. Homer declares that it had one hundred gates, and that it could send out of each gate twenty thousand fighting men and two hundred chariots; that is, one city could furnish two millions of soldiers and twenty thousand chariots—a statement utterly incredible. Of its extent and magnificence, however, we may form some idea when we are told, that an area of nearly twenty square miles—the site which it formerly occupied—is now completely covered with the ruins of enormous palaces, and temples, and monuments, and sphinxes, and tombs. Belzoni says, that his approach to them was “like entering a city of giants:” and it is related, that when Buonaparte was leading his army through Upper Egypt, the soldiers no sooner came in sight of these colossal remains, than, without receiving any command to the effect, they simultaneously halted, being struck with silent astonishment.

Memphis was the city in which the Pharaohs resided, who entertained Abraham and Joseph. It is in the neighbourhood of the Pyramids—those stupendous monuments

of Egyptian vanity—and was for some time the rival of Thebes. Only slight vestiges of it are now to be met with; the greater part of its buildings and architectural beauties having been removed to Alexandria, when that city was in the course of erection.

There are few countries, whose early history is more involved or interwoven with fabulous traditions, than that of Egypt; and those, who would be correct in their statements respecting it, are at all times compelled to use the utmost caution in the selection of materials, and to be content with the most scanty details. Frequently indeed it is necessary, from the absurdity of some events, and the impossibility of others, to reject the accounts altogether that have been handed down; for the Egyptians are seldom to be trusted as their own historians. They fondly regarded themselves as the most ancient nation in the earth; and when Herodotus visited their country, about B.C. 450, they presented him with a list of more than three hundred and thirty kings, who had governed their country during a period of eleven thousand years, or nearly eight thousand years before the creation of the world.

Some authors make them of Ethiopian extraction; while others refer to Misraim or Menes, the son of Ham, as their first king. There seems, however, every reason to believe, that they derived their origin from some of those wandering tribes which frequented from time to time the valley of the Nile; and who were induced to change their mode of life, and become settlers in the country, from the fertility of the soil, and the abundance of those fruits which the land spontaneously produced. This appears the more probable, as the Egyptian monarchs, during many generations, were called SHEPHERD KINGS—a title implying that they belonged to such a class of wanderers. It has been thought by some, that the “scattering of men abroad upon the face of the earth,” which is mentioned in connection with the *confusion of tongues*, was not confined to merely dispersing them about in different regions, but had reference also to an habitual and long-continued wandering up and down, in companies or tribes, without being able to determine upon any fixed place of abode. Whether this was the case with the first inhabitants of Egypt, we cannot tell; but it

is certain, that such has been the condition of millions of our fellow-creatures.

We find the Egyptians a nation as early as the time of Abraham ; for when there was a "famine in the land" of Canaan, he "went down into Egypt to sojourn there," B.C. 1920 ; and Sarah "was taken into Pharaoh's house : " "The princes also of Pharaoh saw her, and commended her before Pharaoh." (Genesis xii. 15.)

The meaning of the word *Pharaoh* in the ancient Egyptian language, is supposed to be *king*. Hence this title was always added to the other names of the Egyptian monarchs, up to the time when the Grecians became masters of the country.

During the reigns of the earlier Pharaohs, the Egyptians were much troubled by the wandering tribes, which infested their territory ; and though they themselves were originally a part of the same people, they came to have such a dread and hatred of them, that they not only refused all intercourse with them, deeming it an "abomination" to "eat bread with the Hebrews"—or *wandering people*, as that word signifies—
" became also exceedingly jealous of all

foreigners ; ever fearing lest, by some secret enterprise, their land might be spoiled, and they robbed of their rights. This affords a reason, why Joseph should charge his brethren with being "spies," who had "come to see the nakedness of the land ;" and exhibits the motives also by which Pharaoh was influenced, when he so generously gave to Jacob and his children possessions in the land of Goshen—a territory, which Moses designates "the best of the land" of Egypt. B.C. 1706.

Goshen was situated in the north-eastern part of Egypt, and was the district through which all those wandering tribes, of whom the Egyptians were so much in dread, must pass, ere they could penetrate into the heart of the country, or reach its capital. While, therefore, the Hebrews, who were rich in flocks and herds, would be induced, by the rich pasturages of Goshen, to settle in and populate the district, they would also, being a brave and active race of people, prove a formidable and effectual barrier against the entrances of all restless and predatory enemies.

The sway of the Egyptian monarchs ap-

pears, at this time, and for some generations after, to have been very mild and pacific: and under it the children of Israel "increased abundantly, and waxed exceeding mighty, so that the land was filled with them." (Exodus i. 7.)

Then "there arose up a new king over Egypt, which knew not Joseph." By this it is generally understood, that a new dynasty now commenced, the conquest of the country having been effected by some foreign power; probably by some of these tribes to which we have already referred. There seems to be an allusion to this fact in some of those traditions and hieroglyphics, which have been handed down from these early ages.

The Pharaoh, who refused to acknowledge himself and his people as being under any obligation to Joseph and his descendants, goes in profane history by the name of Amenoph the First; and he is supposed to have begun his reign about B.C. 1604. The service, to which he and his successors compelled the children of Israel, was that of making bricks and building cities; and Josephus expressly states that some of the pyramids were erected by them. He gives them

credit, indeed, for completing most of the mighty structures of which Ancient Egypt could boast ; and says, that they were forced to learn all sorts of mechanic arts. There are some representations still in existence, which indicate the miserable bondage and the severe distresses of the Israelites at this time. Their departure out of Egypt, which took place B.C. 1491, greatly weakened the power of that country, and placed it at the mercy of its enemies ; nor did it recover from the effects of this departure till the reign of Sesostris, who was the most celebrated of all the Egyptian monarchs. The exploits, which have been ascribed to him, are so extraordinary, that they are generally regarded as fabulous. He is said to have determined upon the conquest of the world ; and, for that purpose, placed himself at the head of a very large army, with which he subdued Ethiopia, India, Asia Minor, and part of Europe ; leaving behind him, wherever he went, monuments of his victorious career, and traces of his power. Herodotus speaks of monuments that were to be seen in his day, bearing such inscriptions as the following :—
“ Sesostris, king of kings, has conquered this

territory by his arms ; ” and, again,—“ This region I obtained by these my shoulders.” For nine years did he continue his conquests, spreading misery and desolation all over the world ; and taking so many kings captive, that when he returned to Egypt, laden with spoil, and flushed with success, he refused to have his chariot drawn by horses, but commanded the captive monarchs to be harnessed and yoked together for that purpose. An ingenious writer endeavours to show, that Sesostris was employed by God to subdue the robbers and rude tribes that infested the land and borders of Canaan ; and that in this manner he prepared that country for the children of Israel, who were then wandering in the wilderness. If such were the case, it will fix the date of his conquests at about B.C. 1450.

The successors of Sesostris, for four hundred years, appear to have been content with his achievements ; and to have resigned themselves to the indolence and pleasures of a palace. The next king, whose name is at all worthy of mention, is the Shishak of Scripture ; who was sent by God to punish ~~Nabuchodon~~ Nabuchodon and the idolatrous inhabitants

of Jerusalem, B.C. 970. He had with him "twelve hundred chariots, and threescore thousand horsemen, and people without number, that came out of Egypt." (2 Chronicles xii. 3.) After his death, Egypt became a scene of anarchy and misrule. The kings were weak and unable to maintain their authority. Usurpers abounded. At one time, twelve monarchs were reigning in different parts of the country. And this state of things continued until Psammeticus, by the assistance of a large army of Greek pirates and mercenaries, subdued all other contending parties, and became sole monarch of Egypt, B.C. 656. Under him the country, in its institutions, its manners and customs, its civil and religious politics, underwent a complete change. The priests, who, prior to this, had everything in their power, and were indeed the rulers of the country, were deprived of their influence; foreigners were introduced, and the nationality of the people destroyed. As the Egyptians had always prided themselves upon their great antiquity, Psammeticus determined to ascertain it by the following experiment. He ordered two newly born children to be shut up in a

room, where they were regularly fed with goats' milk by a shepherd, who was commanded not to utter a word in their presence, nor suffer the children to hear any person's voice. When they had been thus confined about two years, their foster-father happening to be rather later one morning than usual with their supply of milk, they both cried out, as soon as they saw him, *Beccos ! Beccos !* which was found to be the Phrygian word for *bread*. And, after this experiment, the Egyptians were obliged to resign their claim to antiquity in favour of the Phrygians.

Psammeticus was succeeded by his son Pharaoh-Necho. He was a powerful prince, and led an army against Assyria ; and it was in endeavouring to check him in this design, that Josiah, king of Judah, lost his life in the valley of Megiddo, B.C. 610. Necho, however, was afterwards defeated and stripped of all his former conquests by Nebuchadnezzar. This monarch (Necho) paid great attention to navigation ; and some of his vessels, coasting down the eastern side of Africa, discovered the passage round the Cape of Good Hope, two thousand years it was known to European navigators.

Pharaoh-Hophra, who succeeded to the throne, B.C. 594, having promised to assist Zedekiah, king of Judah, in ~~his~~ revolt against Nebuchadnezzar, led an army into Judea for that purpose, and then basely deserted Zedekiah. For this iniquity, God denounced a terrible curse upon Egypt by the mouth of Ezekiel: "It shall be the *basest of the kingdoms*; neither shall it exalt itself any more above the nations: for I will diminish them, that they shall no more rule over the nations." (Ezekiel xxix. 15.) And most strikingly has this curse been fulfilled ever since that time. Conquered first by the Assyrians, who became masters of it shortly after this prediction, it was afterwards the prey of Persia, Greece, and Rome; and then fell into the hands of the Turks, a miserable, degraded, ruined country; the only vestiges of whose grandeur were to be seen in immense masses of piled stones, formerly monuments of Egypt's glory, but now, alas! serving but to point out the melancholy difference between what she once was and what she is now. Egypt still occupies the same territory that she did in the days of her prosperity—the Nile still sweeps through her centre, gentl-

inundating her fields, and making her soil fat—the mountains are still a wall of protection to her on the right hand and on the left; but they have long since been crossed—the enemy has broken through—her cities are deserted, and silent, and fast mouldering away—her lands are untilled, and her fields unsown—her pyramids and temples are no longer used—her arts and her arms are things unknown—and few things within her borders now are so often seen, and heard, and felt, as “the pestilence which walketh in darkness, and the destruction that wasteth at noon-day,” because the curse of God is upon her, and she is the “basest of the kingdoms.”

Soon after the conquest of Egypt by Assyria, alluded to above, Pharaoh-Hophra, with whose treachery God had been so much displeased, was strangled in prison, B.C. 566. Amasis, an usurper, then ascended the throne. He used many endeavours to establish his power, but failed, and died B.C. 525; leaving a kingdom, weakened by intestine broils, and threatened by foreign foes, to his son Psammenitus.

Psammenitus was the last king of Ancient

Egypt. He had scarcely begun to reign before his kingdom was invaded by Cambyzes, at the head of an army of Persians. Psammenitus was defeated and slain ; and Egypt then fell under the Persian yoke, and became a part of the Persian empire, B.C. 525.

The Egyptians were idolators of the grossest kind. Their great god was the ox, a fit emblem of their stupidity ; but they also worshipped dogs, and cats, and crocodiles ; and even leeks and onions. Some idea of their superstitious reverence for these creatures may be conceived from the fact, that when Cambyzes invaded their country, he caused a large number of dogs and cats to be placed in front of his army ; intending by this arrangement, not only to insult their idolatrous religion, but to secure for himself also a more easy victory over his enemies. And so it was : for, while the dogs and cats composed a part of the Persian forces, not an arrow was shot, not a blow struck, by the Egyptians, lest unhappily they might kill their gods.

Yet, though the religion of Egypt was of this absurd and debasing nature, no country, of ancient or modern times, can make greater or juster demands upon our praise and ad-

miration, for knowledge of, and progression in, the arts and sciences. Their wisdom, which is frequently mentioned in the Scriptures, was only exceeded by that of Solomon. They were the inventors of geometry—the science being forced upon them, in the first instance, by the periodical inundations of the Nile. It was this circumstance also, which made them such consummate agriculturists. They were well acquainted with astronomy; and their knowledge of medicine was very considerable. Their looms were everywhere celebrated; and their skill in the use of colours has, perhaps, never been exceeded. They were the first makers of paper. The art of staining and gilding glass, so as to make it resemble precious stones, belonged to them. Brick arches were first constructed by them; while their knowledge and application of mechanical power very far surpassed, in some respects, what moderns can lay claim to. Engineers of the present time are at an utter loss to conceive how those mighty blocks of stone, some of which weigh nearly eight hundred tons, were first moved from their quarries, and then brought to the ~~monts~~ ^{spots} where they are found. Some have

imagined that canals were cut from the river to the quarries, and that the blocks of stone were conveyed thence to their destination on rafts: while others have suggested that the Egyptians used railroads for the purpose. The difficulty of raising them to their several heights, however, remains unexplained.

Among the wonders of Egypt may be mentioned the Pyramids, the highest of which is about six hundred feet in elevation—the Labyrinth, where the bodies of a few kings were preserved—and the lake Mœris, which was made to carry off the superfluous waters of the Nile.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE
OF THE MOST REMARKABLE EVENTS IN THE
HISTORY OF EGYPT.

B. C.

- 2188 Misraim, first king of Egypt.
- 1920 Abraham visits Egypt.
- 1706 Jacob and his family settle in Egypt.
- 1604 Amenoph I., the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph," is supposed to begin his reign.
- 1491 The Exodus, or departure of the Israelites from Egypt.
- 1450 Probable date of the conquests of Sesostris.
- 970 Shishak conquers Rehoboam, king of Judah. After the death of Shishak, Egypt is torn by intestine broils for nearly three hundred years.
- 656 Psammeticus becomes sole king of Egypt.
- 610 Pharaoh-Necho defeats and slays Josiah, king of Judah. Some of Pharaoh-Necho's vessels discover the passage round the Cape of Good Hope.

- 590 Pharaoh-Hophra basely deserts Zedekiah, king of Judah.
- 569 Amasis, an usurper, reigns.
- 525 Psammenitus, the last king of Ancient Egypt, is conquered and killed by Cambyses. Egypt becomes a part of the Persian empire.
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P E R S I A.

THE Persians—a name, which is used to designate both that people and the Medes—were originally the subjects of the Assyrian monarchs. But being treated by them with great cruelty, they frequently revolted; and ultimately obtained their independence. The *Medes*, who were at first superior to the Persians, appear, from the accounts which have been collected respecting them, to have been a nation of priests and warriors. They treated all other people as their inferiors; and indulged in so despotic a disposition, that when, through a change of dynasty, the Persians obtained the supremacy, they rigorously persecuted the *Magi*, or *Median priests*, and the priests of all other nations—in this way evidencing their abhorrence of the treatment which they had received, and of the parties who had promoted that
ment.

It was soon after the death of Sardanapalus, the last king of Nineveh, that Media became a kingdom, to which it was elevated by Dejoces, B.C. 710. Dejoces was an active king and lawgiver. He fell in a battle against the Babylonians.

Under his grandson Cyaxares, the Median power was at its highest pitch of greatness. While this monarch was engaged in a war with the Lydians, a total eclipse of the sun took place; which produced such amazement and consternation in both armies, who were then engaged in battle, that they fled precipitately from the field. The almost immediate result of this was a peace. Cyaxares, being a Mede, treated the Persians with great barbarity. An allusion to the sufferings, which these people endured from him, is made by the prophet Ezekiel: "There is Elam"—or Persia, as it is generally understood—"and all her multitude round about her grave, all of them slain, fallen by the sword, which are gone down uncircumcised into the nether parts of the earth, which caused their terror in the land of the living; yet have they borne their shame with them that go down to the pit." (Ezek. xxxii. 24.)

It was in the reign of this monarch that Nineveh was destroyed, B.C. 606.

Cyaxares was succeeded by Astyages, the Ahasuerus of Daniel. He, wishing to reconcile the Persians to his authority, married his daughter to one of their chiefs. The issue of this union was the celebrated Cyrus, who has been justly denominated the Great. When he came to the throne, the supremacy was transferred from the Medes to the Persians, after it had remained with the former about one hundred and seventy years. It was during the reign of Darius, the uncle of Cyrus, that Babylon was taken and became the seat of the Persian empire. Darius issued the well-known coins called Darics, or sovereigns, which were in high repute for many ages after, on account of the fineness of the gold, of which they were made. It was this Darius who made Daniel the chief minister of his empire. He associated his nephew Cyrus with himself in the government; and gave him the command of the armies that subdued Assyria and Western Asia.

The education which Cyrus received, (if reliance can be placed upon Xenophon, history of this prince has been pro-

nounced by some to be only a philosophical romance,) was admirably calculated to make him the great monarch of a great empire. His talents and virtues were of a very high order. And under him the Persians greatly advanced in civilization and refinement. His name was mentioned by Isaiah more than one hundred and fifty years before his birth—God saying of him, “He is my shepherd, and shall perform all my pleasure: even saying to Jerusalem, Thou shalt be built; and to the temple, Thy foundation shall be laid.” (Isa. xliv. 28.) And in exact fulfilment of this prophecy, he issued an edict, commanding the Jews to return to their native city, and to rebuild its walls and temple. But during his life, nothing more than the *foundation* of the temple could be laid, because the enemies of the Jews obstructed the work. God also calls Cyrus “His anointed, whose right hand I have holden, to subdue nations before him.” (Isa. xlv. 1.) And historians affirm, that he conquered the Syrians, Arabians, Phrygians, and indeed nearly the whole of the Asiatic nations. One of the most celebrated wars in which he was engaged, was that which he carried on against Cræsus, king of

Lydia, who was called the richest of men. Cræsus was completely vanquished by Cyrus, and condemned to be burnt alive. But having thrice repeated the name of Solon—one of the philosophers of Greece, whom he had formerly known—as the lighted torch was being applied to the funeral pile, Cyrus was so touched with this proof of his affection, that he spared his life, and became one of his best friends. The manner and exact time of the death of this monarch are not known. But his tomb was to be seen in the time of Augustus, bearing this inscription : “O man, I am Cyrus, who founded the Persian empire : envy me not then the little earth which covers my remains.”

Cambyses succeeded his father, B.C. 529. He has been called a savage madman. Some notion of his cruelty may be formed from the fact, that he flayed one of his judges alive, because he was wanting in integrity ; and then, nailing his skin to the judgment-seat, exhorted his son, whom he appointed to succeed in office as judge, to remember where he sat, and what he was sitting upon. The account of his expedition into Egypt has already been mentioned in the history

of that country. After its conquest, he resolved to make himself master of Africa, and sent fifty thousand men to plunder the Temple of Jupiter Ammon, which was built on an oasis in the very midst of the desert. The fate of this army was dreadful. Taking with them, for guides, some of the conquered Egyptians, who deeply resented the affront which their nation had received from the Persians, they were led through trackless deserts and over burning sands, where neither tree nor water could be seen. Then, being abandoned by their Egyptian conductors, they wandered about in wretched dismay till nearly the whole army had perished. Dr. Darwin thus describes their condition :

“ Wave over wave the driving desert swims,
Bursts o’er their heads, inhumes their struggling
limbs :

Man mounts on man ; on camels camels rush ;
Hosts march o’er hosts ; and nations nations crush ;
Wheeling in air, the winged islands fall,
And one great earthy ocean covers all.”

Not contented with this terrible disaster, Cambyzes almost immediately after set out with a large army for Ethiopia, resolving to effect the conquest of that country. But

being ignorant of the way, and refusing to prepare any store of provisions, his soldiers soon became the prey of famine. They fed on mosses and grass as long as any could be obtained. But when these failed, they cast lots that one out of every ten might be eaten by his comrades. Their fate is described by the same poet, who says :

“ Day after day their dreadful route they steer,
Lust in the van, and rapine in the rear ;
Loud o’er the camp the fiend of Famine shrieks,
Calls all her brood, and champs her hundred beaks ;
Darts from above, and tears at each fell swoop,
With iron fangs, the decimated troop.”

On his return home, B.C. 522, Cambyses died of a small wound he had given himself in the thigh, while mounting on horseback. The Egyptians, ever ready to nourish their superstitions, observed that it was the very spot, on which he had wounded their god, the ox.

Cambyes left no issue ; and the throne was seized by one of the Magi. But he was quickly deposed and slain : and the crown was conferred on Darius Hystaspes by his fellow-noblemen. There is a ridiculous story told, to the effect that the Persian noblemen

had agreed among themselves, that he, whose horse neighed first, should be king ; and that Darius contrived by some means to make his horse neigh first ; whereupon the rest immediately saluted him as their monarch : a clap of thunder, heard at the same moment, seemed to confirm the choice.

Whether this tale be true or not, it is certain that Darius had no claim to the throne. Yet still his accession was willingly allowed. He soon distinguished himself by his activity and military achievements. Babylon revolted, and sustained a siege of twenty months. And Darius had almost despaired of taking it, when Zopyrus, one of his noblemen, who was very much attached to him, devised the following stratagem. He cut off his nose and his ears, and went over to the Babylonians, while the blood was yet streaming—telling them that it was in this way he had been treated by Darius, and that he was resolved to be revenged. The Babylonians, crediting his statement, made him their commander-in-chief : soon after which, Zopyrus found a favourable opportunity of betraying the city into the hands of his master.

Darius spread his arms into the countries beyond the Indus. But not satisfied with his conquests in this direction, he resolved to attempt the subjugation of Greece. He, therefore, built a bridge of boats across the Danube. But finding nothing except danger, where he only expected an easy conquest, he was obliged to retreat with the loss of nearly his whole army. He prepared a second and a third expedition ; but with no better success. His fleet was shattered in a storm, and his army defeated on the plains of Marathon, B.C. 496. He was afterwards about to place himself at the head of a fourth expedition, when he was seized with a mortal disease, of which he soon after died—having reigned forty-six years—B.C. 486.

His son Xerxes, not profiting by the lessons which his father's repeated defeats supplied, determined to invade Greece in person ; and for this purpose collected the largest army that was ever assembled. It amounted, according to some historians, with the women and servants who attended it, to upwards of five millions of people. It is said that the monarch, in one of his fits of ~~melancholy~~ holy reflections, gazing upon the

huge mass that marched before him, and remembering that in the short space of one hundred years they would all be as silent as the dust beneath their feet, burst into tears ; and for a moment regretted that ambitious vanity, which had prompted the gathering together of such an innumerable host. Will it be believed, that these five millions of Persians were successfully withstood and bravely repulsed by three hundred Spartans with Leonidas at their head ? Yet so it was. And Xerxes, after a series of losses and defeats, returned, covered with disgrace, to Persia ; leaving behind him a large army under his most skilful generals. But this was soon annihilated by the Greeks.

Historians are divided in their opinions, as to whether it was this monarch or his successor, that goes by the name of Ahasuerus in the Book of Esther. It seems more probable, however, that it was the latter. Xerxes was assassinated after a reign of twenty-one years, B.C. 465.

His son Artaxerxes, who was surnamed "the long-handed," because one of his hands was longer than the other, was a mild and beneficent prince. He sent Ezra and Nehe-

miah to rebuild Jerusalem about B.C. 450; and died after a reign of forty-one years, after having been repeatedly humbled by the Greeks.

The Persian empire now began to decline rapidly. Already abandoned to every luxury of oriental countries, the people became effeminate and powerless. The soldiers, who were formerly renowned for their hardihood and bravery, had degenerated into debauched and boasting cowards. The monarchs seldom took the field against a foe without their hundreds of thousands; and the slaughter that ensued, whenever a defeat was sustained, was both bloody and indiscriminate, sparing neither age, nor sex, nor condition. It was a common observation among the Greeks, when they visited some field of battle, where in former years their fathers had encountered the Persians, that it was easy to distinguish the skulls of their countrymen from the skulls of the Persians; because those of the latter were softer and in a state of more rapid decay—a singular evidence of the effeminacy of the Persians.

Artaxerxes Mnemon, or “he of a strong
” was the eighth king of Persia

from Cyrus. His title to the throne was disputed by his brother Cyrus. But Artaxerxes defeated him in an engagement, where more than a million of men stood arrayed against each other. The celebrated *retreat* of the ten thousand Greeks under Xenophon—so admirably related by that general and historian in his *Anabasis*—began from Cumaxa, the place where this battle was fought.

After this success, Artaxerxes was singularly unfortunate. The Greeks invaded his country; and would probably have entirely subdued it, had not the Persian gold found a way of corrupting some of their principal men. Artaxerxes at last died of a broken heart, B.C. 360.

Darius III. was the last king of Persia. Alexander the Great invaded his dominions; defeated him in the three great battles of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela; drove him to a distant part of his dominions; burnt his capital; and put an end to the Persian empire, B.C. 330, and two hundred and twenty-eight years after it had been founded by Cyrus.

Darius was treacherously murdered by one of his officers. He was found in his chariot by some Macedonians, covered with wounds,

and on the point of expiring. He summoned sufficient strength to ask for a little water ; and, on being presented with some, expressed his dying thanks, and sent a grateful message to Alexander ; who caused him to be buried with every mark of royal honour.

The sources, whence the history of Persia is derived, are rather more numerous than those, which furnish details for the history of other countries of this age. No nation was more anxious than the Persian to transmit a correct account of themselves to posterity. And there is a great mass of Persian literature in the form of poetry and romance, which professes to contain a faithful account of all the traditions that have been handed down. Yet very little reliance can be placed upon these traditions, as containing the facts of Persian history. The principal authorities to be consulted for these are Herodotus and Xenophon ; the Books of Esther, Ezra, Nehemiah, and Daniel ; and the Zendvesta, or great book of the Magi, which was considered to be of divine authority, and contains the religious system of Zoroaster, who flourished about B.C. 520. This great Persian reformer and legislator is said to have found-

ed the most perfect code of morals and system of religion, which the unassisted reason of man could accomplish. He taught that there were two principles in the world, good and evil—light being the type of the good, and darkness of the evil. Each of these principles had the power of creation, and they were opposed to one another. But the good principle was finally to prevail, and subdue all things. It was because *light* was the type of their god, that the disciples of Zoroaster turned towards the sun when they worshipped. And they always affirmed that they did not worship the fire, but only the god in the fire. The Parsees, or fire-worshippers, still exist.

Of the trade and commerce of the Persians, but little can be said in addition to what has been observed of the Babylonian commerce; except that they maintained the credit of the people, whom they conquered, in these respects.

There are no particular monuments of Persian skill in architecture remaining. Nor have we any proof, that they excelled in their knowledge of the arts and sciences.

**CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF THE MOST
REMARKABLE EVENTS
IN THE HISTORY OF THE PERSIAN EMPIRE.**

B.C.

- 710** The empire founded by Dejoces.
- 606** Cyaxares assists Nebuchadnezzar in the overthrow of Nineveh.
- 548** Cræsus, king of Lydia, vanquished by Cyrus.
- 538** Babylon, being taken by Cyrus, becomes the seat of the Persian empire.
- 529** Cambyzes succeeds his father Cyrus.
- 522** Darius Hystaspes is elected monarch.
- 520** Zoroaster probably flourished about this time.
- 493** Darius invades Greece.
- 486** Death of Darius.
- 480** Xerxes his son makes an unsuccessful attempt to conquer Greece.
- 450** Artaxerxes sends Ezra and Nehemiah to rebuild Jerusalem.
- 400** Artaxerxes Mnemon defeats his brother Cyrus. Ten thousand Greeks,

· who assisted Cyrus, retreat from Persia.

330 Darius III., the last king of Persia, is conquered by Alexander the Great. The Persian empire ceases.

G R E E C E.

GREECE, than which, perhaps, no country in the world was ever more celebrated for its patriots, its philosophers, and its poets, was originally inhabited by a race who were sunk in the most wretched barbarism. Some idea of their miserable degradation may be formed from the fact—that they worshipped Pelasgus as a god, because he *first taught them to feed upon acorns.*

It is supposed that Greece was originally peopled by colonies from Egypt and Asia; though the Greeks themselves received with the most perfect contempt any account which interfered with the notion, that they were the original inhabitants of the country. The absurd but amusing fables, which they invented to prove that their ancestors were born from the ground on which they dwelt, have found their way, more or less, into the histories of those times,

greatly detract from the value of what might otherwise be deemed authentic narratives; and Plutarch justly says of this period: "All is nothing but monstrous and tragical fiction; nor is there to be expected anything that deserves credit, or that carries with it the appearance of truth."

The Pelasgi, a name which was subsequently applied to all the Greeks, seem to have been the first people of this country, who were formed into a separate state, about B.C. 2000. But it is impossible to rely with any certainty upon the dates of this age. The Pelasgians are regarded as the constructors of those fortresses called Cyclopiæ, which are equally remarkable for their size and rudeness. Many of them, it is said, are to be seen at the present time; somewhat resembling, in the form of their construction, the fortresses, which have been discovered in many of the South Sea Islands; and, in the character and size of their stones, those remains of the ancient Druidical temples, which still exist in some parts of our own country.

Pelasgi was not the only name by which the Greeks were distinguished. They we-

also called Hellenes from Hellen, a famous leader, who flourished about B.C. 1450; and whose successors became masters of nearly the whole of Greece. Other names, by which they were known, were Argivi, from the city of Argos; and Danai, from Danaus, an Egyptian king, who settled at Argos.

The most ancient cities of Greece were Sicyon and Argos; supposed to have been built by Inachus, the founder of the Pelasgi. Inachus is made contemporary with Abraham. Athens was built by Cecrops, an Egyptian, B.C. 1550. He was its first king, and has the credit of introducing civilization into Greece. About the same time, Thebes was founded by Cadmus, a Phœnician. He was the author of the Greek alphabet. Pelops, a Phrygian, gave a name to that part of Greece, called Peloponnesus; and which is now known as the Morea. His family acquired great influence.

It was a quarrel between the descendants of Pelops, who were of Phrygian extract, and the people of Phrygia, which occasioned the Trojan war—the most interesting event in this part of Grecian history.

Pelops had been compelled to seek refuge in Greece from the injurious treatment, which he experienced in his native land ; and his followers never forgot nor forgave those, who had driven them into exile. A series of wars, therefore—perhaps deserving rather the name only of piracies—was kept up between the colonies and the mother country with various success. But when Priam became king of Troy, which was at that time the capital of Phrygia, he sent his son Paris to the Peloponnesus to negotiate a peace.

Paris, however, instead of accomplishing his mission, seduced Helen, the wife of Menelaus, king of Sparta, and carried her back with him to Troy. This rape excited universal indignation. All Greece rose in arms. And Agamemnon, at the head of one hundred thousand men, set sail for Troy. But the city was well provided against a siege, and for ten years resisted every attempt to take it. Until at length stratagem was had recourse to ; and then Troy fell. The city was levelled with the ground, and its inhabitants all slain or reduced to the condition of slaves. The conquerors, however

suffered nearly as much as the conquered. For during the time that they had been absent on this expedition, the states of Greece were thrown into the greatest confusion. The thrones of many of the absent princes were seized upon by usurpers; and when they returned from the conquest of Troy, they had, in not a few instances, the mortification of seeing, not only that they were deprived of their territory, but that their own wives had become wedded to the men who had robbed them of their crowns.

It was soon after the Trojan war, and while the affairs of Greece were yet unsettled, that the Heraclidæ, or descendants of Hercules, made themselves masters of Peloponnesus. This conquest was effected without much bloodshed. It took place B.C. 1104; and forms an interesting epoch in ancient history. And from this date, Grecian history becomes more important in its character, as it is also more to be relied on.

As Greece consisted of a large number of states, which were perfectly distinct in their character, and yet united by many common bonds, it may be well, perhaps, to notice some of these institutions which, at the same

time, promoted their nationality, and secured their independence of each other.

One of the chief bonds of union was their religion ; which has been designated a religion of poetry and love, in opposition to those gloomy systems of superstition, which were so prevalent among the pagans of Asia and Egypt. All the gods of the Greeks were *human personages*, and were regarded by them as their particular friends. Hence their worship was cheerful and joyous. They had *games* in honour of their deities at stated intervals ; in which prizes were distributed to those who excelled in athletic exercises. And though the reward of the victors was no more than a simple wreath of laurel, it was esteemed the highest honour that a Greek could obtain. Any Greek might enter the lists ; but no foreigner was allowed to contend for a prize. The principal of these games were the *Olympic*, celebrated at Olympia, in honour of Jupiter, every fourth year. They were permanently established, B.C. 776 ; and the space of time intervening between one celebration and another, was called an Olympiad.

Another bond of union among the Greeks

was the *Amphictyonic league*, so called from Amphictyon, one of the early kings of Athens, who first established it. It was a council composed of persons sent from every state. They entirely directed the affairs of Greece; and there was no appeal from their decision. The Delphian oracle was under their control; and by its influence they sometimes administered the government of distant countries. The responses of this oracle were universally considered as infallible; though there was sometimes a singular and inexplicable ambiguity about them.

Four *dialects* were spoken in Greece; the Attic, spoken in the vicinity of Athens—the Ionic, spoken in the isles and the Greek settlements in Asia Minor—the Doric, spoken in Peloponnesus—and the Æolic, spoken in Bœotia.

The two principal states of Greece were Athens and Sparta, so called after their chief cities. Though belonging to the same country, called by the same name, and using the same language, no two cities in the world, perhaps, ever exhibited so complete a contrast in their appearance, in the laws by which they were regulated, and in the man-

ners of their people. Thucydides observes, that "if any one were to see Athens in ruins, he would be so struck with a sight of its magnificence and extent, that he would suppose her power to have been twice as great as it really was; whereas, if he saw Sparta in the same condition, he would wonder where resided that mighty power, which it seemed at all times able to command." The Spartans or Lacedæmonians—for they are known by both names—were grave, severe, and unrelenting. They delighted in uncouthness. Cunning and theft were a part of their education. War was their trade, and courage their god; and so infatuated were they with this virtue, that mothers would sometimes coolly put their sons to death, who had fled from the face of the foe or had lost their arms in battle. On the other hand, the Athenians were lively and humane, but fickle. They were a polished people. And Plutarch says that their good men were the most just and equitable in the world.

The form of government in Sparta was a monarchy. Two kings always reigned at the same time—one being a check upon the

other. The most celebrated of these kings was Lycurgus, renowned as a lawgiver. His legislation was not a written code, but consisted of short sentences, like proverbs, which referred rather to domestic life and physical education, than to the constitution of the state, or the form of its government. His object was to render the Spartans a hardy and spirited race; and in this he succeeded. But they became also ferocious and cruel. Lycurgus flourished about B.C. 850. After his laws had been fully brought into operation, the Spartans engaged in war with the Messenians, whom they conquered after a desperate struggle. And then the Spartans became a powerful people.

Athens was governed during a period of four hundred and fifty years, commencing from its foundation by Cecrops, by seventeen kings. Their history is for the most part fabulous. Codrus, the last, devoted himself to death for the good of his country, B.C. 1068. On which the Athenians, declaring that no one could be found worthy to succeed him, abolished royalty. And the state was then governed by magistrates, who were — Archons. The commonwealth pros-

pered for a long time under these magistrates ; till at length, from an abuse of power on the part of the aristocracy, who greatly oppressed the people, anarchy began to prevail and to threaten destruction to the whole state. In this emergency, Draco was chosen to prepare a code of laws, by which justice might be impartially administered to all the members of the community, B.C. 622. He was a man of stern integrity, but rigorously severe. "Small crimes," said he, "deserve death ; and I have no higher doom for the greatest."

But this was more than human nature could bear. Draco's laws became inoperative, and he was obliged to flee from his country. Disturbances then began to break out afresh ; and the Athenians would have been destroyed by their own factions, had not a deliverer appeared in the person of Solon, whose virtues and courage had already procured for him the favour of his countrymen. This excellent man effected the most beneficial change in the state. He abolished all the laws of Draco, except those against murder ; established liberty on its proper basis ; discouraged immorality of every kind ; and

became at once the protector and friend of the poor. He was offered the kingly power, and might have made himself absolute; but he steadily refused it, declaring that he desired rather to be the friend, than the ruler, of his country. It is said that when he had peaceably settled the Athenian affairs, he went into voluntary exile; having first bound his countrymen by an oath never to break his laws until he should return. He died at Cyprus, B.C. 558. He was one of the seven wise men of Greece, and justly allowed to be the most illustrious of them all. The other six were Thales, Pittacus, Bias, Cleobulus, Periander, and Chilo.

Before the death of Solon, the liberties of Athens were again invaded by Pisistratus; whose riches, liberality, and eloquence had won for him universal favour. Solon himself said of him: "Take away only his ambition, and there is not a man more naturally disposed to every virtue, nor a better citizen." He secured for himself regal power, but governed with mildness and equity. It is to him that we are indebted for the first revised edition of Homer—his court being the resort of poets and learned men of the

age. He died B.C. 528, and was succeeded by his sons. But they were unequal to the task of governing such a state as Athens. And after a reign of fourteen years, one was murdered and the other driven into exile. The city then became the seat of contending parties.

It was in this state of things that Darius, king of Persia, resolved to invade Greece, and to add that country to his already overgrown territories. He was particularly exasperated against the Athenians, because they had assisted some of his subjects in rebellion : and it was the duty of one of his officers to come into the presence of his majesty every evening before he retired to rest, and exclaim in a loud voice : "Remember the Athenians." He therefore sent an army, consisting of one hundred thousand foot and ten thousand horse, to invade the Athenian territory. But this immense force was completely defeated at Marathon, by ten thousand Greeks under Miltiades, B.C. 490. For this victory the Athenians at first greatly honoured Miltiades. But being unsuccessful shortly after in another expedition, he was condemned in a heavy fine, and

thrown into prison, where he died of his wounds. On his death, Themistocles and Aristides, two illustrious Athenians, for a time governed the state. The former was the most able politician, and the latter the most virtuous man, of the age. Aristides was surnamed "the Just." And there is a story told, that when Themistocles was endeavouring to procure his banishment from Athens, Aristides was requested by one of the citizens, whom he met in the street, but who did not know him, to write his own name upon the oyster-shell which he presented. This was the usual manner of declaring the sentence of banishment in Athens, and was called *ostracism*. Aristides asked the man, if he had ever received any injury from the person whom he wished to send into exile. The man replied, that Aristides had never done him any harm, that he believed he was a very good man, but that he could not bear to hear others always calling him the Just. The patriot did as he was desired, and walked away. After the death of Darius, his son Xerxes resolved to prosecute the war with Greece, which his father had begun: and at the head of more than

five millions of men, he marched into that country for this purpose. Struck with terror at this formidable army, many cities submitted to him as he advanced ; and he therefore expected an easy conquest. But Leonidas, king of Sparta, had stationed himself at Thermopylæ—the entrance into Greece—and was prepared to dispute his passage. When Xerxes saw by what a handful of men he was opposed, he sent a herald, commanding them to give up their arms directly. “Come and take them,” was the reply of the sturdy Spartan. But this was not quite so easy a task as the Persian monarch had supposed. Dismissing all his troops except three hundred Spartans, Leonidas for three following days successfully withstood and repulsed every attack of the enemy ; until at length, finding that treachery was at work against them, he commanded his brave soldiers to stand back to back, and sell their lives as dearly as possible. Only one soldier out of this little heroic band escaped to carry the tidings to Sparta : and some notion of the spirit of that people may be gathered from the fact, that they loaded him with every possible insult and reproach, because

he had preferred flight to death. When Leonidas was leaving home, and his wife came to take her farewell, having made up his mind to conquer or perish, he only gave her this order, that after his death she was to marry no one but a man of a noble courage, that he might give her children worthy of her first husband.

After the battle of Thermopylæ, nothing but disaster and defeat attended the progress of Xerxes. His forces by land and by sea were everywhere humbled—and mostly by armies, not one-fiftieth part as numerous as themselves. Themistocles, who had greatly improved the naval power of Athens, defeated the Persian fleet near the island of Salamis with signal success. Æschylus compares the Athenians in this battle to fishermen, and the Persians to fish caught in their net. Xerxes witnessed the engagement from the island, on one of whose heights he had stationed himself:

“ A king sat on the rocky brow,
That looks o’er sea-girt Salamis;
And ships in thousands lay below,
And men in *nations*—all were his.
He counted them at break of day—
And when the sun set, where were they? ”

After this defeat, Xerxes resolved to return into Asia. And this mighty monarch, who had entered Europe with such pomp, was obliged to return by a small fishing-boat. He left a large army behind him in Greece, under his most celebrated general. But it was almost totally annihilated soon after, at the battle of Plataea, B.C. 479. It is said that upwards of two hundred thousand Persians were killed in this battle. Several other victories were obtained by the Greeks. And so rapid and complete was their success, that the Persians were at last obliged to sue for peace. Articles were arranged, which were altogether to the advantage of Greece, B.C. 449; and in this manner terminated the Persian wars, which had lasted during a period of fifty-one years.

Scarcely had the Grecian states been freed from their common enemy, Persia, before they began to turn their arms against each other. And some of them had recourse to *foreign* power to establish their own. Sparta became jealous of Athens; which, under the administration of Pericles, its chief magis-

trate, was now rising to supremacy over most of the other states. Pericles had become a great favourite with the Athenians, because he espoused the cause of the people, and reduced the influence of the Areopagus—the great aristocratic court of Athens. His principal object was to make his native city in every respect the mistress of Greece. For this purpose, he adorned it with the most beautiful buildings—giving encouragement to all artists and men of science, who desired to enrich it with monuments of their skill. Phidias, the celebrated sculptor, was one of his friends. He pursued a line of policy also, which was at first attended with the most brilliant success, and seemed likely to consummate the greatness of Athens. But the outbreak of the Peloponnesian war, which lasted during twenty-seven years, frustrated his purpose; and ended in the complete overthrow of Athens.

This remarkable war originated between the Corinthians and the people of Corcyra, one of their colonies, who refused to pay them that respect which was due. Both
ies applied to Athens for assistance;
by the advice of Pericles, was afforded

to the Corcyreans. Corinth immediately made application to the Lacedæmonians, and to others of the Grecian states, which unanimously resolved to rise in her defence. The war was then begun on both sides by a display of their utmost strength. Athens sent a fleet to plunder and lay waste the Peloponnesian coasts, while the Spartans sent an army of sixty thousand men to invade Attica. Soon after the commencement of hostilities, however, a plague broke out in Athens; which, happening at such a time, was the greatest calamity that could have befallen the city. Pericles himself was carried off by it, B.C. 429. And so complete had been his sway over the Athenians during the forty years that he had administered their affairs, that, for some time after his death, they appeared to be without a commander for their armies, or a leader in their councils. Surrounded in his dying moments by friends, who supposed that he was insensible to all that passed, and who began to recount his glorious achievements, Pericles suddenly interrupted their conversation, and observed: "You forget the most glorious circumstance of my life—that I have never compelled an

Athenian citizen to put on mourning." Though a very eminent statesman, and possessed of such all-powerful eloquence, that the Greeks used to say—"when he spoke, it was like thunder and lightning," Pericles was a vicious man; and by his example did more harm to the Athenians, in ruining their morals, and introducing among them the most luxurious effeminacy, than all his political regulations ever did good.

After the death of Pericles, the war was carried on with various success. But no decisive event occurred for some years. At length, the Spartans, who, throughout the whole of this war, characterized themselves by the most cruel barbarity—frequently massacreing their enemies without the slightest mercy—being worsted in several engagements, sent to Athens, soliciting a peace. But their request was rejected with the utmost disdain. And then, being roused to indignation at this treatment, they sent another army into the field, which turned the tide of events in their favour. A truce was then agreed on for fifty years. It did not last long.

aged at the manner in which Sparta

had sacrificed their interests to her own, the Corinthians secretly engaged some of the other states in a confederacy against her. The movement was encouraged by the Athenians, who now followed for a short time the counsels of Alcibiades, the nephew of Pericles. This extraordinary man, who had been a disciple of Socrates, and was at the same time a philosopher, a statesman, and a debauchee, advised an expedition to Sicily, which was unsuccessful ; and productive in the end of most terrible disasters to the Athenians. The misfortunes of this people began to accumulate very rapidly. But they prepared to meet them with admirable courage. And though deserted by their allies, and troubled by rebellions in some of their own provinces, their operations were so vigorous, that, for a time, the fate, which had threatened them, seemed to be suspended. But it was only a temporary respite. Under the command of Lysander, the Spartan fleet obtained several naval victories ; and so humbled the maritime power of the Athenians, who were accustomed to boast of their supremacy on the seas, that at length they had no more than eight vessels left. In these circumstances

it was resolved to attack Athens itself, both by sea and land. The city offered an obstinate defence : and no one was allowed, under pain of death, to speak of a surrender. But it was of no avail. The Spartans triumphed, B.C. 404 : and on the very day, May 16th, when the Athenian citizens were wont to celebrate their glorious victory over the Persians, the walls of their city were demolished, and they themselves compelled to submit to the most humiliating conditions. The broken-hearted citizens, unable to bear the sight of their degradation, retired to their houses, and refused to be seen in the streets. Lysander appointed thirty men, who were called tyrants, to see that all his conditions were fulfilled.

But though the supremacy of Athens was thus destroyed, the confederate states found that they had gained nothing, and that Sparta ruled them with a rod of iron. This quickly enkindled among them a sympathy for the Athenians ; and they were invited to take refuge in some of the neighbouring towns. A large number of these exiles soon assembled at Thebes, among whom was Thrasybulus. He resolved to deliver his country.

Marching, therefore, at the head of a few friends, his countrymen, he entered Athens, expelled the thirty tyrants, and restored the former constitution. But the Athenians were no longer the same people. The wars in which they had engaged, the defeats which they had sustained, and the bitter humiliation to which they had been so recently exposed, had left them mean-spirited and vicious. And they soon gave proof of how much they had degenerated. One of their first acts was to condemn Socrates, their wisest and most virtuous philosopher, to death, on a charge of corrupting their youth, and teaching them to despise the gods. The venerable man, who was at that time in his seventieth year, defended himself with great simplicity and courage. And when desired to pass sentence upon himself according to custom, he said : “ For my attempts to teach our youth justice and moderation, I demand, O Athenians, to be maintained at the public expense during the remainder of my life— an honour, which I deserve ; because I have always striven to make my countrymen happy.” When he was requested to escape from prison, he refused, observing that he

could not escape death. And just before he drank the poison, which was to terminate his existence, he remarked: "That though it was somewhat painful to contemplate death, only God could tell whether it or life was the better." He was put to death, B.C. 400; and the Athenians brought themselves into general disgrace by the barbarous act.

There was, however, very little or no difference between them and the rest of the Greeks. And it is most melancholy, to contrast the condition of this entire people, at the time we are alluding to, with that of their ancestors. That long line of patriots, who had lived only for the good of their country, had been succeeded by a race of paltry and ambitious tyrants, who cared for nothing but personal aggrandizement. The noble courage, which had won the fields of Marathon and Plataea, was now rapidly disappearing. The virtuous independence, which scorns all treachery and baseness, and for which the ancient Greeks had been so distinguished, was almost unknown. And but for two or three names, which shine in this page of her history, and which, perhaps, appear more illustrious because of the preva-

lent degeneracy, we might here take our leave for ever of Greece, as a great country.

Four years after the death of Socrates, Agesilaus, king of Sparta, and one of her most active monarchs, resolved upon the invasion of Persia; and began a war, which was attended with some success. But he was suddenly recalled to Greece, by learning that another Peloponnesian war had broken out. On his return to Sparta, Agesilaus found that the principal states of Greece were leagued against him, and that it would be impossible successfully to resist their united forces. He obtained a victory over the Thebans at Coroneia, B.C. 394. But it was at the expense of so many men, that he regarded it as little better than a defeat. His navy was entirely destroyed. He, therefore, sent ambassadors to Persia, to conclude a peace with that country. And as an earnest of his sincerity, he offered to sell the liberties of Greece for gold—an offer that was gladly accepted. He then united with the Persians in an attempt to destroy all the other powers of Greece, in which he signally failed.

Something like a peace was afterward

arranged. But Artaxerxes, the Persian monarch, having requested a convention of representatives from all the Grecian states at Sparta, that he might obtain their assistance in subduing the Egyptians, Epaminondas, a noble Theban, there exposed the designs of the Persians and the treacherous policy of Agesilaus; and by his arguments completely frustrated the intentions of Artaxerxes and the Spartan monarch. This was a signal for the renewal of the war. Epaminondas, the Theban general, encountered the Lacedæmonians on the field of Leuctra, where he obtained a decisive victory. Shortly after, he won the great battle of Mantinæa, B.C. 363. This was one of the severest and most dreadful conflicts, in which the Greeks were ever engaged. But Epaminondas fell in the arms of victory, and with him perished the glory of Thebes. He and Pelopidas, a fellow-soldier who first delivered Thebes from the tyranny of the Spartans, were not inaptly compared to the *sun*—since with them rose and set the greatness of their native city.

Two other wars were subsequently waged, which were called the Social and the Sacred

wars.* They produced no other effect than to complete the destruction of Grecian liberty and to make the states an easy prey to Philip,† king of Macedon, who was only waiting for some opportunity to interfere with the affairs of Greece, and to take them entirely into his own hands. An opportunity was soon afforded. The Amphictyons solicited his assistance against their enemies. This he willingly rendered; and, in a short time, by the force of his arms and the vigour of his policy, he was chosen captain-general of all Greece; and appointed to lead their forces against the Persian empire, B.C. 337. But while preparations were making for this great enterprise, Philip was assassinated by a Macedonian nobleman.

However, his son, Alexander the Great, eager for glory and bent on the conquest of Asia, put himself at the head of thirty-five

* The former was a confederacy of the other cities against Athens. And the latter was a war, which was undertaken by the Amphictyonic league against the Phocians for committing sacrilege.

† It was against this monarch that the celebrated Demosthenes delivered many of his most powerful orations.

thousand men, and marched towards the Hellespont. He met with but little opposition till he reached the river Granicus; on whose banks he found posted six hundred thousand Persians, awaiting his arrival. Without deigning to reflect upon the immense disparity of his own army, he gave the signal for battle; and, with the loss of only one hundred and fifteen men, won a glorious and decisive victory. This success made him undisputed master of Asia Minor. The battle of Issus followed soon after, in which the victory was for some time doubtful. But the Macedonians prevailed: and, according to some historians, took forty thousand prisoners, B.C. 333. In the battle of Arbela, fought two years after this, the Persians were irretrievably ruined. Alexander then became sole master of their immense empire. He also took the city of Tyre, which had long maintained its independence, after a siege of seven months.

About the same time, Alexander paid a visit to Jerusalem, where the high-priest and the other priests, fearing his wrath, came out to meet him. By some secret influence, generally supposed to have been

occasioned by a dream, Alexander paid the high-priest the utmost respect, and encouraged him to ask any favour that he desired. He entreated the protection of the holy city, which the conqueror granted; and after bestowing many other favours upon the Jews, he left them in satisfaction and peace. His next attempt was upon Egypt, which submitted to him without a blow. Here he built the city of Alexandria, which still bears his name; and which he intended to be the metropolis of his empire. His conquests then spread over India, where he met with, and defeated, the celebrated Porus. When the Indian king was brought into his presence, and Alexander requested to know in what way he would be treated—"Like a king," was the reply—an answer which so pleased the Macedonian monarch, that he immediately set Porus at liberty and restored him to his kingdom. After the conquest of India, Alexander wished to extend his dominions yet farther. But his troops refused to accompany him; and he was obliged to return to Babylon, B.C. 324. Here he gave himself up to the most extravagant debaucheries; degrading both his name and his

character by his disgusting intemperance. After one of his disgraceful scenes of drunkenness, he was seized with a violent fever, which carried him off in the thirty-third year of his age, B.C. 323. He left behind him the character of a generous conqueror. But the history of his private life shows him to have been guilty of the utmost wantonness and cruelty ; capricious and violent ; and almost destitute of any great and ennobling principles. At the instigation of a wretched courtesan, he set fire to Persepolis, the ancient capital of the Persian monarchs. Clitus, his dearest friend, he murdered with his own hand : he put the philosopher Callisthenes to death in the same manner, because he would not worship him : and ordered the assassination of Parmenio, his oldest and best general. He was educated by Aristotle, the founder of the Peripatetic philosophers.

After the death of Alexander, four of his generals, Ptolemy, Cassander, Lysimachus, and Seleucus, seized upon his dominions and divided them amongst themselves. Ptolemy possessed himself of Egypt. The kingdom of Macedonia was allotted to Cassander.

Lysimachus obtained Thrace and some other provinces. And Syria was given to Seleucus. The history of these princes and their descendants is a history of wars, treacheries, and bloodshed. And in but very few cases were they permitted to retain their thrones without molestation. Their territories ultimately formed a part of the Roman empire. The successors of Ptolemy, who were all distinguished by the same name, retained their independence for a longer period than the others. It was during the reign of the first of the Ptolemies that the Alexandrian library, the largest and most famous in the world, was instituted. His successor employed seventy learned men to translate the Old Testament Scriptures into Greek, B.C. 277. Their version is called the Septuagint.

On the death of Alexander, Athens, and several others of the Grecian states, resolved upon an attempt to regain their independence; but were defeated. In one of those popular outbreaks, which were so common at Athens—and which, in the present instance, was a consequence of this defeat—the noble and virtuous Phocion, who has been called the last of the Athenians, and

whom neither Persian nor Macedonian gold could bribe to forget the interests of his country, lost his life. He was called "The Good," and was put to death in his eightieth year,—with his last breath praying for the prosperity of his country.

The next event worthy of notice was the formation of the *Achæan league*, which was a confederacy of twelve small cities in the Peloponnesus. They engaged to protect each other ; and, at the same time, to recognise their individual independence. This league lasted one hundred and thirty years, and was at one time very powerful. But it was at length destroyed by the Romans ; who had succeeded in drawing one city after another from it, until they put an end to it, B.C. 147. Philopœmen, who was a general of the Achæans, has been called the last of the Greeks. He was a man of great courage and virtue ; and generally met with success. He took Sparta, and abolished its constitution.

After the destruction of the Achæan league, Greece became a Roman province under the name of Achaia. And Athens was made the university of the Roman empire.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF SOME
OF THE MOST REMARKABLE EVENTS IN
GRECIAN HISTORY.

B.C.

- 2000 The Pelasgi form themselves into a state.
- 1550 Athens built by Cecrops.
- Cadmus builds Thebes.
- 1450 Rise of the Hellenes.
- 1329 Amphictyon, king of Athens, forms a league between the states of Greece.
- 1183 Troy taken by the Greeks.
- 1104 The Heraclidæ make themselves masters of the Peloponnesus.
- 1068 Death of Codrus, the last king of Athens. *Archons* appointed.
- 850 Lycurgus gives laws to Sparta.
- 776 Olympic games established.
- 622 Draco's code of laws adopted at Athens.
- 590 Solon appears as the deliverer of Athens.
- 560 Pisistratus becomes supreme in Athens.
- 558 Death of Solon.
- 490 Miltiades defeats the Persians at Marathon.

- 480 Xerxes attempts to enter Greece at Thermopylæ, but is withstood by Leonidas.
- 479 Battle of Platæa.
- 449 Peace established between Greece and Persia.
- 431 The Peloponnesian war begins.
- 429 Death of Pericles.
- 404 Athens taken, and its walls demolished.
- 400 Death of Socrates.
- 396 The Spartans invade Persia.
- 394 Battle of Coroneia, between the Spartans and the Thebans.
- 363 Epaminondas, the Theban general, obtains a great victory over the Spartans at Mantinæa.
- 357 The Sacred War.
- 356 The Social War.
- 337 Philip, king of Macedon, becomes captain-general of Greece.
- 336 Alexander the Great, his son, succeeds him ; and invades Persia.
- 330 Alexander, after the three great victories of Granicus, Issus, and Arbela, overthrows the Persian Empire.
- 323 Death of Alexander. Division of his empire between four of his generals.

- 277 The Old Testament Scriptures translated into Greek, by command of Ptolemy Philadelphus.
- 276 Formation of the Achæan league.
- 146 Greece becomes a Roman province.
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R O M E .

THERE is an interesting story relating to the first founders of Rome, which is generally received as authentic. It is as follows: An usurper of the throne of a small kingdom in Italy, fearing for the stability of his power, caused two children, recently born and the legitimate heirs to the throne, to be cast into the river Tiber. The river, having lately overflowed its banks, bore them along on the surface of its stream till they were deposited at the foot of a large tree; standing upon one of the hills, on which Rome was afterwards built. Here they remained, suckled, it is said, by a she-wolf and fed by a woodpecker, until discovered by a shepherd, who carried them home to his wife and educated them as his own children.

As the twins, who were called Romulus and Remus, grew up, they were distinguished great courage and activity. And having

resolved to build a city, they selected that spot where they had been found by the shepherd. While the city was in course of erection, Remus provoked his brother by contemptuously leaping over its walls; and, in the heat of their dispute, Remus was slain.

Romulus, being thus left without a rival, proceeded with his plans; and completed the foundation of Rome in the sixth Olympiad,* B.C. 753. But the city, which was ultimately unrivalled in magnificence and became the capital of the world, consisted at first of about a thousand miserable huts, arranged in the form of a square. Its inhabitants were all outlaws and robbers, men of desperate fortunes, who were glad to make it a place of refuge. They chose Romulus for their leader or king; and he, in return, chose from among his new subjects, who numbered not more than five or six thousand, one hundred senators or older men, who were to compose his council and assist him in governing the state.

In order to obtain wives for his people, Romulus had recourse to stratagem. He invited the Sabines, his neighbours—with

* Vide page 59.

whose women he wished his subjects to intermarry, but who regarded the Romans as of too mean an origin for such alliances—to witness certain splendid games, which he had instituted in honour of Neptune. And while the Sabines were eagerly gazing on the various spectacles, he ordered his soldiers to rush in and carry off their matrons and maidens by force. After this daring robbery, the two peoples became one: and the Sabine king being soon after slain, Romulus became sole monarch of both nations. After a reign of thirty-seven years, Romulus suddenly disappeared. It is supposed that he was put to death in the senate-house, B.C. 717.

Numa Pompilius was the second king of Rome. He was a peaceful monarch, and very attentive to the interests of religion. He gave names to the twelve months; and built the temple of Janus, which he ordered to be open in time of war, and shut only in time of peace. He died, B.C. 679.

The next king was Tullus Hostilius. He was a warlike prince, and subdued several of the neighbouring nations. Among these were the Albans, who afterwards became incorporated with the Romans. When these

two peoples were about to engage in battle, they agreed, in order to prevent unnecessary effusion of blood, to decide the contest by single combat. But as there were at that time in each army three brothers, whose mothers were sisters, and who were all held in good repute for their courage, *they* were intrusted with the fate of the two armies. Victory decided for the Romans. The three Alban brothers, who were called Curiatii, were slain. Their antagonists were named Horatii; and only one survived the combat.

Ancus Martius was the fourth king of Rome. His death happened, B.C. 618, after he had swayed the Roman sceptre for twenty-seven years. Both he and his successor, Tarquinius Priscus, paid great attention to the city; extending and strengthening its fortifications, and adding greatly to its beauties and conveniences. Ancus has the credit of constructing the first bridge across the Tiber. Tarquin rendered himself famous by the public sewers, and other stupendous works, which he caused to be made. He was assassinated, B.C. 578; having bequeathed his kingdom to his son-in-law Servius Tullius, who was a great favourite with the Roman people.

This prince instituted the Census, which was a public register of all the Roman citizens with their families, the amount of their property, and the nature of their professions. The officers, who took and kept this account, were called *Censors*; and they afterwards became very powerful in the state. Though esteemed and beloved by all classes, Servius Tullius met with a violent death at the hands of his own children, after a glorious reign of forty-three years, B.C. 535.

The vacant throne was immediately filled by his son-in-law Tarquin, who had been the principal agent in his murder. Tarquin was surnamed the Proud, and was the seventh and last king of Rome. While on an expedition at some distance from the city, his son violated the honour of Lucretia, a noble Roman lady; and she, unable to bear the thoughts of her shame, sent for her husband and the members of her family. Having related in their hearing the misfortune which had befallen her, Lucretia committed suicide in their presence. Then Brutus, who, up to this time, had affected the idiot that he might not be subjected to the tyranny of Tarquin, immediately assembled the people.

And exhibiting Lucretia's bleeding body, he procured a decree that the Tarquins should be expelled, and royalty for ever abolished. This took place B.C. 509.

The republican form of government was now established at Rome; the chief power of the state being invested in the hands of two magistrates, who were called Consuls, and who were annually elected. The first consuls were Brutus and Collatinus, the husband of Lucretia. But scarcely had they entered upon the duties of their new office, before a conspiracy was set on foot for the purpose of restoring the Tarquins. The two sons of Brutus were among the conspirators. And when the plot was discovered by means of a slave, who accidentally heard all the particulars, Brutus, who was compelled by reason of his office to preside as judge upon the occasion, condemned both his sons to be beheaded in his presence, though many petitions that their lives might be spared were presented to him by the pitying bystanders. This stern triumph of justice over affection at once established the authority of the consuls, and effectually deterred any of

the citizens from attempting the restoration of royalty

But though foiled in the issue of this conspiracy, Tarquin resolved not to resign his pretensions without a struggle. He, therefore, made application to Porsenna, a powerful Tuscan prince, and engaged him in his interest. A battle was fought, in which the Romans were defeated, and compelled to retire towards their city. In effecting their retreat, they had to pass over a wooden bridge; and fearing lest the army of Porsenna should gain admission by this bridge to the city, they resolved to break it down. But this could never have been accomplished, had not Horatius Cocles, a Roman soldier, bravely opposed the whole force of the enemy. Singly, but fearlessly, he kept them at bay, until his companions had effected their purpose. And then, though severely wounded, he leaped into the river, and swam in his armour across the stream, amid a shower of darts, to join his admiring countrymen. Many other instances of heroic courage and noble self-devotion occurred in this early age of the republic; and it was well for
that she then had men, who not only

knew how to lead her armies to victory, but who also understood, and enforced, the worth of that moral principle, which is the truest dignity and power of a state.

Soon after the war with the Tuscans, in which it seems uncertain whether they or the Romans were the conquerors, a dispute took place in Rome between the *Patricians* and *Plebeians*. These were the two classes into which the people were divided; and they corresponded, as nearly as may be, with our *nobility*, or those of *gentle descent*, and the *commonalty*. As is too often the case, the rich became the oppressors of the poor; and the people, goaded to madness by a sense of their wrongs, demanded redress.

A new magistrate was therefore appointed, who was called a *Dictator*, B.C. 497. He was invested with absolute authority during the time that his services were needed; and then retired into private life. So popular was the dictatorship at Rome, that in all subsequent emergencies some one was nominated to it.

But as occasions of discontent and discord will always be rising in a state, in which the government is not properly settled, and where the balance of power is very unequal, it was

not long before the Plebeians found another cause of complaint. And then they demanded that other officers should be appointed, whose particular province it should be to defend *their* interests. These officers were called *Tribunes*, and were annually elected. At first, B.C. 493, there were only two; but the number was afterwards increased to ten. The creation of these tribunes, however, instead of allaying the disputes between the upper and the lower classes, served only to foment them: and very soon after, a present of corn having been made to the city, which was in great distress for want of it at that time, Coriolanus, a patrician of high rank and a skilful general, proposed that it should not be distributed to the people, till they had consented to abolish the tribuneship. For this he was banished from Rome; and being bent upon revenge, he joined the Volsci, who were at that time making war against the Romans. Under him the Volsci were everywhere victorious. And Rome itself would have been destroyed, had not his mother and wife, with many other ladies, persuaded him to spare it.

For many years during this period, Roman

history is little else than a repetition of struggles and disputes between the aristocracy and the people; or a recital of desultory wars with neighbouring nations, which were attended with various success.

About the year B.C. 450, Siccius Dentatus, a tribune, urged the senate to form a new code of laws. Ambassadors were, therefore, sent to Greece for the purpose of collecting the best codes. On their return, ten men, called *Decemviri*, were chosen to arrange them; and a new constitution was established. But as if to show their insincerity and heartlessness, one of the very first acts of the *Decemviri* was to procure the assassination of Siccius Dentatus, who had been mainly instrumental in raising them to their office. This brave old man, who, during a military life of forty years, had fought in one hundred and twenty-one battles, and could show the scars of forty-five wounds, was beset by one hundred assassins. But nothing daunted, he planted his back against a wall, resolved to sell his life as dearly as possible. He slew fifteen of his antagonists and wounded thirty; and was at last only overcome by stratagem—his enemies throw-

ing darts and stones at him from a distance. This base act, together with an attempt which was made by one of the Decemviri, named Appius, upon the chastity of a Roman virgin, so exasperated the people, that they abolished the new office, and restored the ancient form of government, B.C. 446.

After a series of civil commotions, during a part of which the celebrated Cincinnatus was made dictator, the Gauls under Brennus marched into Italy and laid siege to Rome. At the approach of this formidable host, the inhabitants abandoned their city, and retired to the neighbouring towns. When the Gauls entered Rome, they found it everywhere deserted. They then attacked the Capitol, in which some choice troops had been left; and would certainly have taken it, had not the cackling of some geese, which were kept there, sacred to Juno, suddenly apprized the Roman sentinels of their danger, and roused them to exertion.

In such a miserable state was Rome after the departure of the Gauls, who are generally supposed to have been bought off with gold, that the people could hardly be persuaded to return to it; and loudly clamoured

that the seat of their empire should be removed. But while the subject was being publicly discussed, a centurion, either from contrivance or chance, came with his company to relieve guard according to custom ; and happening to give the usual word of command in rather a loud tone of voice : " Ensign, plant your colours ; this is the best place to stay in "—the people shouted out : " The gods have spoken ! Rome for ever ! " c. 386.

Camillus was chosen dictator ; and under his direction, Rome soon began to revive and to recover its former prosperity. Shortly after, some particular privileges being granted to the plebeians, by which their right of admission to the highest offices of state was recognised, those civil dissensions, which had so often paralyzed her power and frustrated her attempts against foreign states, were far less frequent than before. And the people began to apply themselves with energy to those conquests, which their ambition had so long desired.

In a war with the Samnites, who were assisted by Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, the Romans were twice defeated. But the vic-

tories were purchased at so dear a rate, that Pyrrhus exclaimed aloud : “ One more such victory, and I am undone.” Soon after this, he himself suffered a most signal defeat, and was obliged to return into Greece ; leaving the whole of Italy at the disposal of the Romans, B.C. 274.

Italy, however, was too contracted a sphere for the exercise of Roman ambition. And a pretext was soon made for quarrelling with the Carthaginians—a flourishing and powerful people, whose naval supremacy was everywhere acknowledged. Up to this time Rome had never possessed a *fleet*. But its citizens, aware of the impossibility of successfully encountering the Carthaginians, while their inferiority in this respect was so palpable, began to build ships of war with wonderful vigour and diligence : and in the course of a few months, they had the satisfaction of obtaining a complete naval victory over the Carthaginians, who lost fifty vessels in the engagement, B.C. 260. The column, which the Romans erected to commemorate this, the first trial of their naval skill, still exists ; and is in a good state of preservation.

The war was now carried into Africa ; and up to the very gates of Carthage. But Xantippus, a Grecian general, having come over to its assistance with a large body of troops, the tide of success was turned. The Romans were routed with great slaughter, and Regulus, their general, taken prisoner, B.C. 256. Several other engagements followed with various success ; until the Carthaginians, defeated at sea, and surrounded by their enemies on land, were compelled to sue for peace. This was only granted on very harsh terms, B.C. 240.

It was after the termination of this first Carthaginian war—or *Punic war*, as it is more frequently called—that the temple of Janus was shut for the second time since the foundation of the city ; the Romans having been engaged in war ever since the reign of Numa Pompilius, or during a space of four hundred and forty years. Even now their tranquillity was but very brief. For the people became weary of peace. And after subduing some minor foes, they again directed attention to the Carthaginians. Hostilities were easily renewed between them : and the second Punic war commenced, B.C. 218. It was

conducted on the part of the Carthaginians with consummate valour and skill by Hannibal. This extraordinary man—who was, perhaps, the greatest general that the world ever produced—when only nine years of age, had been compelled by his father to swear eternal enmity to Rome. And the oath he never forgot. No sooner had war been proclaimed, than he hastened towards Italy; resolved to carry it into the very heart of the adversaries' territories. He was in Spain at the time; but marched with such wonderful rapidity and determination, that his appearance in Italy seemed like the work of enchantment. Rivers, and forests, and mountains, and armed nations were unable to obstruct his progress. He conducted his soldiers over the Pyrenees, and through the hostile countries of Gaul; crossed the Alps, which had always been considered inaccessible, in fifteen days; and routed the Romans with terrible slaughter in four pitched battles. The last of these battles was fought at Cannæ; where the number of Roman knights, who were slain, was so great, that Hannibal sent two bushels of rings, taken from their fingers when dead, to Carthage.

It is supposed, that if he had followed up his victories, and marched straight to Rome, the city would instantly have submitted, so great was the consternation excited by these disasters.

In this emergency, however, the senate appointed Fabius Maximus—who from his great caution and prudence was called the *buckler* of Rome—to command its forces in Italy. And by his politic movements he probably did more to save Rome from destruction, than all the valour of its soldiers could have effected. But the senate resolved also to carry the war into Africa; and sent an army thither for that purpose. In consequence of this, the Carthaginians, being unable to defend themselves, recalled Hannibal from Italy. The brave old general left it with many tears; for he had had it under his almost absolute sway for sixteen years. When he arrived at Carthage, he found none but raw and undisciplined troops for his soldiers. But with these he was compelled to hazard a battle; in which, after exhibiting prodigies of military skill and valour, he was at last defeated and obliged to flee. Carthage then again sued for peace,

which was obtained only on the most humiliating conditions. And in this manner terminated the second Punic war, B.C. 201.

Rome was now become a mighty republic ; and began to undertake in good earnest the subjugation of the world. Her arms were everywhere victorious. Her military fame was unrivalled. Syria, Greece, and Macedonia submitted to her sway. And though many powerful kings strove to check her progress all their efforts resulted in disastrous defeats. Antiochus, who was, perhaps, the most formidable of her opponents at this time, was compelled to make the most humiliating submission. He was required to give up Hannibal, who had fled to him for protection ; and who was the only foe that the Romans feared. That illustrious Carthaginian, now seeing that his fate was inevitable, put an end to his life by taking poison ; which, ever since his defeat, he had carried about with him in a ring.

In less than twenty years after the death of Hannibal, the Romans resolved upon the utter destruction of Carthage ; though that city was only a miserable remains of its former self. Its citizens however, displayed

most wonderful courage and patriotism in their extremity ; exhibiting the utmost military ardour and energy. Under the influence of a preternatural excitement, women of the highest rank cut off their long and beautiful hair for slings and bowstrings ; and nobles consented to toil and sweat at the hammer and forge like the meanest peasant. But nothing could avert the fate, which now threatened it. Scipio, the Roman general, was victorious ; and Carthage was given to the flames, B.C. 146. It is said, that Scipio, while witnessing the burning of Carthage, was affected by an anticipation of the destruction of his own city : and gave vent to his feelings, by quoting those lines from Homer, in which Hector is made to predict the fate of Troy :

“ Yet come it will, the day decreed by fates :

(How my heart trembles, while my tongue relates !)

The day, when thou, imperial Rome, must bend,

And see thy warriors fall, thy glories end.”

From this time the Romans began to degenerate. They grew fond of luxury. And by adopting the vices and indolence of the people they conquered, they soon became as dissolute and effeminate as their

vanquished foes had been before. Cato the Censor, a man of rigid but stern virtue, endeavoured to stop this progress towards ruin by passing some very stringent laws, which enforced great simplicity of life. But though his exertions were applauded, and procured him respect, they failed to accomplish the result which he desired. For—to use the language of an historian, who speaks of this period—“the depravity of manners was so rapid in its progress, that it seemed to swell at once into the utmost excess of corruption.”

The Gracchi, grandsons of one of the Scipios, witnessing with indignation this sad degeneracy, strove also to stem its tide. Being elected tribunes, they urged certain measures, which, if carried, would have at least retarded its course. But having made themselves by these means obnoxious to the patricians, they were both basely and cruelly murdered; and with them perished the freedom of the Roman republic, B.C. 120.

The constitution remained for a while. But the supreme power was usurped by a few, whose avarice and oppression produced most dreadful confusion and misery

throughout the whole of Italy. Among these, Marius and Sylla were perhaps the most notorious. They had both distinguished themselves in the war with Jugurtha, an African prince : and each aspired to absolute power. At one time, Marius was master of Rome ; and secured his authority by the most abominable cruelties, inhumanly sacrificing all who dared to oppose him. But death soon stopped his bloody career. And then, as though the miseries of Rome had only begun, Sylla, who had been banished from Rome by Marius and his friends, returned at the head of a large army ; and, entering the city, filled it with slaughter. The first thing that he did was to enclose seven thousand citizens, whom he had promised to pardon, in a public building, and then murder them without mercy. Every day slew its hundreds ; and these were generally the most innocent of the inhabitants, and the least tainted with vice. Rome was one great charnel-house. And when the monster was humbly asked, how many he intended to kill, he replied, that he was not quite certain whom he should leave alive. He made himself perpetual dictator,

B.C. 81; but died soon after of a most loathsome disease. Both he and Marius strove to drown remorse on their death-beds by unremitted intoxication.

The examples of these two men stimulated Catiline, a profligate young nobleman, to conspire against the state, B.C. 62. Associating with himself a set of abandoned wretches, he formed a scheme for murdering the senate, plundering the treasury, and setting Rome on fire. But the horried plot was detected by Cicero, who was to have been one of the victims; but who acted with such energy upon the occasion, that all the designs of the conspirators were frustrated, and Catiline was obliged to flee. He was afterwards killed, while engaged in battle with an army, that was sent to disperse his forces.

In the year B.C. 59, Julius Cæsar, Pompey, and Crassus, three celebrated generals, divided the government amongst themselves, forming what has been called the first *triumvirate*. But Crassus being soon after killed in an expedition against the Parthians, jealousies began to rise between the two surviving triumvirs, neither of whom could

rook a superior. And when Pompey strove to influence the senate to strip his rival of power, Cæsar, who was at that time in Gaul, resolved to march into Italy. He therefore collected his forces, crossed the Rubicon, which was the boundary of his province, obtained possession of Rome, pursued Pompey into Greece, and defeated him on the plains of Pharsalia, B.C. 48. Pompey escaped with his life, and fled into Egypt, where he was murdered; and Cæsar became undisputed master of the world.

Cæsar was proclaimed tribune, consul, and dictator at the same time; thus uniting in himself all the dignities and power of the state. After this, he made additional conquests; one of which was effected with so much ease, that his letter to Rome, which conveyed the intelligence, consisted of but three words, "Veni, Vidi, Vici."* The senate were so servile in their adulation, that they gave him the public designation of the *demi-god*. But a considerable number of them, regarding him as an usurper, and believing that he aspired to the title of king, entered into a conspiracy for his destruc-

* I came, I saw, I conquered.

tion. Among them was Brutus, whose life Cæsar had formerly saved, and whom he had taken into closest friendship. On the fifteenth of March, B.C. 44, when Cæsar entered the senate-house, the conspirators surrounded him; and while one of them presented a petition, another savagely stabbed him. Cæsar, feeling himself wounded, immediately prepared to make resistance; but seeing Brutus among the number of the assassins, he exclaimed, "Tu quoque, Brute!" and wrapping his face in his mantle, fell to the ground, pierced with twenty-three wounds. He left behind him the character of being first in everything; and it was the remark of one of his friends, that in whatever circumstances he might be placed, he could not help being master. Pliny declares that he could read, and speak, and write, and hear, at the same time. Though he was unquestionably ambitious, perhaps no Roman ever carried himself more nobly than Cæsar did at the time of his greatest elevation—his frankness and benevolence greatly endearing him to all classes of the people.

After the murder of Cæsar, the conspira-

tors fled from Rome. A new triumvirate was formed ; consisting of Octavius, Cæsar's nephew, Marc Antony, and Lepidus ; who resolved to avenge the atrocious deed that had been committed. At Philippi they encountered and defeated Brutus and Cassius, who proclaimed themselves the defenders of Roman liberty ; but who destroyed themselves, when they found that the fortune of the day was against them. Lepidus was soon dismissed from the triumvirate ; and Octavius and Antony then began to quarrel for the ascendancy. Infatuated by the charms of the voluptuous Cleopatra, queen of Egypt, Antony gave himself up to a course of the most disgraceful debaucheries ; and became so enervated and indolent in consequence of his practices, that, though by far the better general, he became an easy prey to his rival. After sustaining a defeat at Actium, B.C. 31, he put an end to his existence ; leaving Octavius without a single competitor for power. When Octavius arrived at Rome, the senate conferred upon him the title of Augustus, a name by which he was ever after distinguished. They also voted him *absolute authority*. And without

a single struggle, the constitution was deliberately changed from a Republic to that of an Empire, January 1st, B.C. 28.

It must be acknowledged that during the reign of Augustus, (for we have now again to speak of *reigns*,) the Roman people had no reason to regret this change—all the horrors of civil war being now over, peace established, and the arts and sciences extensively encouraged. Augustus wisely disguised his real character, and appeared just and merciful; devoting himself to the improvement, the decoration, and the happiness of his empire. Before his time, Rome could not be called a magnificent city. But he used to make it his boast, that he found it brick, and left it marble. During the Augustan age, which was the time of its greatest prosperity, Rome was the resort of the learned and polite; and as a city, it was worthy their residence. That portion of it, which was surrounded by walls, was twenty miles in circumference; but the suburbs are said to have covered a yet more extensive surface than the city itself. The population has been variously stated by different writers,

some making it as much as eight millions ; but the more probable account is, that it never exceeded four millions. It contained four hundred and twenty temples, fourteen theatres and circuses, one of which would hold two hundred thousand people ; sixteen public baths, built entirely of marble ; and palaces, and halls, and columns, and triumphal arches without number. To crown all—as though its inhabitants believed that its glory could never fade away, they called it “The Eternal City.”

It was in the reign of Augustus, that our Lord was born ; and in the very year of His Blessed Nativity, peace being universally established throughout the wide dominions of the Roman empire, the temple of Janus was once more shut—a circumstance, which had only happened twice before since its erection. For during a period of six hundred and seventy-nine years, the Romans had only had one interval of peace ; and that lasted but about six months. So that to this people especially, His Advent should have been the signal of “peace and good-will.”

Augustus died, A.D. 14 ; and was suc-

ceeded by Tiberius, a wicked and disgusting tyrant ; who, by the help of a favourite servant, more brutish still than his master, filled all Rome with abominations. It is supposed, that he ordered the assassination of his nephew Germanicus, whom Augustus had appointed to succeed him ; and who, on account of his numerous virtues, was the darling of Roman people.

Tiberius died, A.D. 37, or four years after the crucifixion of our Saviour. And, as though he had been resolved to perpetuate his cursed memory as long after his death as he possibly could, one of his last acts was to bequeath the empire to Caligula ; than whom, he knew, no greater monster breathed. It was a favourite saying of this Caligula, " Oh ! that all the Roman people had but one neck, that I might kill them at a blow," —and his wholesale murders proved that he was in earnest. Bent upon insulting the citizens as much as he could, he made his horse consul, and ordered it to be treated with all due honour ; building for it a marble stable, and frequently inviting it to dine with his own company. But his reign was a very short one. He was privately assas-

sinated in the twenty-ninth year of his age, having ruled the empire about three years.

His uncle Claudius, a man of very weak intellect, succeeded him. In his reign Britain became a Roman province. Claudius was poisoned by order of his wife, who was impatient to bring her son Nero to the throne, A.D. 54. This step, however, she had occasion to regret; for Nero, abandoning himself to the society of the most depraved, was persuaded to murder his mother—a deed, to which he readily consented. Words cannot describe his other barbarities. He set fire to Rome with his own hands; and then charging the Christians with being the incendiaries, he commenced a dreadful persecution against them. He was at last deprived of the empire; and, being condemned to death, committed suicide, A.D. 68. He was the last of the descendants of Augustus; and, after his death, the succession to the throne was always disputed; he, who had the command of the largest army, generally raising himself to the imperial dignity.

It would be tedious, and productive of but little advantage, to trace the course of each emperor, and mark the gradual pro-

gress of this mighty state towards decay. Most of its rulers were among the very basest of men; and though we occasionally meet with an honourable exception, we find them utterly unable to stay the downfall of their sinking empire. It will, therefore, be sufficient in this work merely to mention their names, in the order in which they succeeded one another.

Galba, Otho, and Vitellius, who were the three next emperors to Nero, were all bad men, and met with violent deaths, A.D. 69. Vitellius has been characterized as nothing but a beastly glutton.

He was succeeded by Vespasian, and Titus, the son of Vespasian. They were the destroyers of Jerusalem.

Domitian, the brother of Titus, was a monster in cruelty. He was the last of the twelve Cæsars, and was murdered, A.D. 96.

On the death of Domitian, the senate chose Nerva, a foreigner, a mild and virtuous man, to be emperor. He adopted Trajan, a Spaniard, for his successor, who was both warlike and politic. Trajan has been called the best of the Roman emperors, though he was a persecutor of the Christians.

He reigned twenty years, and died A.D. 117.

To him succeeded Adrian, a pacific but cruel prince, fond of public buildings.

Antoninus was the next emperor, A.D. 139. He protected the Christians, and died universally regretted, A.D. 163.

Aurelius was a philosopher and a warrior also ; but he renewed the persecutions. He reigned seventeen years.

His son Commodus was an infamous monarch, and was assassinated, A.D. 192.

Pertinax reigned three months.

Then Didius *bought* the empire.

Severus, Caracalla, Macrinus, and Helio-gabalus, a profligate boy, were the next emperors.

Alexander Severus commenced his reign, A.D. 222, by stopping the persecutions against the Christians. His constant rule was : " Do unto others, as you would they should do unto you." But he was also murdered, A.D. 235.

For fifty years after his death, the empire was distracted by contending factions ; sometimes several emperors would be reigning at the same time, the soldiers proclaiming whomsoever they pleased : and at one period there

were no less than thirty competitors for the crown. It will excite no surprise, that the Christians endured many severe persecutions during this state of things.

At length *Constantine*, who declared himself to be of their number, and who was sur-named the Great, obtained exclusive possession of the empire; and under him Christianity became the established religion, A.D. 324. He built Constantinople, and removed the imperial residence to it; an event, which subsequently occasioned the division of the empire into two parts—East and West. After this, Rome became an easy prey to the Goths, and Vandals, and other barbarous tribes; who, pouring down into Italy from different parts of Europe, besieged the “eternal city,” and compelled its inhabitants to take refuge in other towns. The principal leaders of these barbarous tribes were Alaric and Attila.

**CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE
OF SOME OF THE MOST REMARKABLE EVENTS
IN THE HISTORY OF ROME.**

B.C.

- 753** Foundation of Rome by Romulus.
- 717** Numa Pompilius succeeds Romulus.
- 679** Tullus Hostilius becomes king.
- 618** Death of Ancus Martius, his successor.
- 578** Assassination of Tarquinius Priscus,
the fifth king of Rome.
- 550** Institution of the Census.
- 535** Servius Tullius is assassinated; Tar-
quinius Superbus reigns.
- 509** Royalty abolished at Rome. Tarquin
and his family expelled. A repub-
lican form of government established.
Brutus and Collatinus elected Con-
suls.
- 497** Appointment of the first dictator.
- 493** Creation of tribunes.
- 490** Coriolanus banished from Rome.
- 450** Decemviri chosen to form a new code of
laws.
- 446** The decemviral power abolished; and
the former government restored.

P.C.

- 438 Commotions at Rome. Cincinnatus appointed dictator.
- 389 The Gauls attack and burn Rome.
- 274 All Italy comes under the power of the Romans.
- 260 The Romans build their first fleet ; and obtain a great naval victory over the Carthaginians.
- 240 End of the first Punic war. The temple of Janus shut for the first time since the death of Numa Pompilius.
- 218 Commencement of the second Punic war. Hannibal defeats the Romans in four great battles.
- 215 Battle of Cannæ.
- 201 End of the second Punic war.
- 146 Destruction of Carthage.
- 120 Death of the Gracchi.
- 81 Sylla makes himself perpetual dictator.
- 62 Catiline conspires against the state.
- 59 The first triumvirate.
- 48 Cæsar defeats Pompey on the plains of Pharsalia.
- 44 Cæsar is murdered in the senate-house.
- 43 The second triumvirate.

B.C.

- 28 The form of government is finally changed; and Augustus Cæsar becomes emperor.

A.D.

- 14 Tiberius succeeds Augustus.
37 Tiberius bequeaths the empire to Caligula.
40 Caligula is assassinated; and his uncle Claudius succeeds him.
54 Claudius being poisoned, Nero obtains the throne.
68 Nero commits suicide; and Galba reigns.
69 Galba is murdered; and Otho is made emperor.
— Otho kills himself, and is succeeded by Vitellius.
— Vitellius is killed. Vespasian obtains the empire.
78 Titus succeeds his father Vespasian.
81 Domitian succeeds his brother.
96 Domitian is murdered, and Nerva is chosen.
98 Nerva dies, having adopted Trajan.
117 Death of Trajan. Accession of Adrian.
139 Antoninus Pius becomes emperor.
163 Marcus Aurelius fills the throne.

A.D.

192 His son Commodus is assassinated.

— Pertinax reigns three months, and is slain.

— Didius buys the empire, and is murdered.

192 Severus obtains the throne.

217 Caracalla, his son, is assassinated by Macrinus.

218 Macrinus is killed by his guards.

222 Heliogabalus is dethroned, and murdered by his soldiers.

235 Assassination of Alexander Severus, after a prosperous reign of thirteen years. After his death, great confusion prevails.

306 Constantine becomes emperor.

324 Christianity established as the religion of the empire.

* A GENERAL CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE
OF THE PRINCIPAL EVENTS RECORDED IN
ANCIENT HISTORY.

B. C.

- 4004 The creation of the world.
 2348 The deluge.
 2247 The building of Babel and the confusion of tongues ; followed by the dispersion of mankind.
 2200 Ninus, or Nimrod, is supposed to found the Assyrian empire.
 2188 Misraim, or Menes, is supposed to found the kingdom of Egypt.
 2000 The Pelasgi form themselves into a state ; and build Sicyon.
 1920 Abraham visits Egypt.
 1822 Death of Abraham.
 ——— Memnon, an Egyptian, is said to invent the Alphabet.
 1728 Joseph sold into Egypt by his brethren.

* In addition to the foregoing Chronological Tables, which refer to the history of each country separately—it has been thought that a General Table, containing most of the remarkable events in Ancient History, would be a suitable addition to the present work. One is therefore supplied.

B.C.

- 1706 Jacob and his family settle in Egypt.
1604 Amenoph I., the Pharaoh "who knew not Joseph," is supposed to begin his reign.
1571 Birth of Moses.
1550 Athens built by Cecrops.
—— Cadmus builds Thebes.
1491 The Exodus, or departure of the Israelites from Egypt.
1451 Moses dies in the land of Moab, having completed the Pentateuch.
—— The Israelites enter into Canaan.
1450 Probable date of the conquests of Sesostris.
—— Rise of the Hellenes.
1329 Amphictyon, king of Athens, forms a league between the states of Greece.
1250 Semiramis enlarges and beautifies Babylon; and spreads her conquests.
1193 The Trojan war begins.
1183 Troy taken by the Greeks.
1104 The Heraclidæ make themselves masters of the Peloponnesus.
1095 Israel becomes a kingdom. Saul is made king.
1068 Death of Codrus, the last king of Athens. *Archons* appointed.

B.C.

- 1056 Death of Saul.
1048 David becomes sole monarch of Israel.
1015 David dies; and is succeeded by Solomon.
1004 Dedication of Solomon's temple.
975 Division of the kingdom of Israel.
Rehoboam becomes king of Judah,
and Jeroboam king of Israel.
880 Foundation of Carthage by Dido.
850 Lycurgus gives laws to Sparta.
776 The first Olympiad.
753 Rome built by Romulus, its first king.
747 Death of Sardanapalus, king of Assyria. Divison of the Assyrian empire.
— Commencement of the *Nabonassarean era*.
721 The kingdom of Israel ended, and the ten tribes carried into captivity.
710 The Persian empire founded by Dejoces.
656 Psammeticus becomes sole king of Egypt, after a long period of anarchy.
622 Draco's code of laws adopted at Athens.
606 Nineveh taken and destroyed.
590 Solon appears as the deliverer of Athens.

B.C.

588 Jerusalem taken by Nebuchadnezzar, who puts an end to the kingdom of Judah.

538 Cyrus takes Babylon, and overthrows the Babylonian empire.

536 Cyrus releases the Jews from their captivity in Babylon, and restores them to their own land.

525 Cambyses conquers Egypt, and adds it to the Persian empire.

515 The Temple rebuilt at Jerusalem.

509 Royalty abolished at Rome, and a republic established.

497 Appointment of Lartius, as the first dictator, at Rome.

493 Darius invades Greece.

— Tribunes created at Rome.

490 Battle of Marathon.

480 Xerxes makes an unsuccessful attempt to conquer Greece.

450 Decemviri chosen to form a new code of laws at Rome.

— Nehemiah governs Jerusalem.

449 Peace established between Greece and Persia.

446 The decemviral power abolished at

B.C.

Rome, and the former government restored.

431 The first Peloponnesian war begins.

404 Athens taken, and its walls demolished.

400 The retreat of the Ten Thousand.

— Death of Socrates.

389 The Gauls, under Brennus, attack and burn Rome.

363 Battle of Mantinæa.

337 Philip, king of Macedon, becomes captain-general of Greece.

330 Alexander the Great overthrows the Persian empire.

323 Death of Alexander. Four of his generals divide his empire between them.

320 The Romans defeated by the Samnites.

277 The Old Testament Scriptures translated into Greek.

276 Formation of the Achæan league.

274 Pyrrhus, king of Epirus, who had assisted the Samnites in their war against Rome, abandons Italy to the Romans.

264 The first Punic war begins, and lasts twenty-three years.

B.C.

- 260 The Romans build their first fleet,
and obtain a great victory over the
Carthaginians.
- 218 The second Punic war commences ;
and continues seventeen years.
- Hannibal crosses the Alps, and enters
Italy.
- 215 Battle of Cannæ.
- 202 Scipio invades Africa ; and approaches
Carthage. Hannibal is recalled
from Italy.
- 201 Battle of Zama, in which the Cartha-
ginians are defeated with great
slaughter.
- 190 A Roman army enters Asia for the
first time ; and defeats Antiochus,
king of Syria.
- 183 Death of Philopœmen, the “last of
the Greeks.”
- 167 The Romans overthrow the kingdom
of Macedon. Perseus, the last
monarch, is led in chains to Rome.
- 149 Commencement of the third Punic war.
- 146 Destruction of Carthage.
- Greece becomes a Roman province.
- 133 Spain becomes a Roman province.

B.C.

- 106 Jugurtha, king of Numidia, is defeated by Marius, the Roman consul; and his kingdom annexed to the Roman empire.
- 91 The Social, or Italic war, between the Romans and the Italian states, commences; and continues three years.
- 86 Civil wars in Italy, between Marius and Sylla, begin.
- 64 Death of Mithridates the Great, after having been completely vanquished by the Romans.
- 59 The first triumvirate at Rome.
- 55 Julius Cæsar conquers Gaul and invades Britain.
- 48 Battle of Pharsalia. Death of Pompey. Cæsar becomes master of Rome.
- 44 Cæsar is murdered in the senate-house.
- 43 The second triumvirate formed at Rome.
- 42 The battle of Philippi; in which Brutus and Cassius, the last defenders of Roman liberty, are defeated.
- 31 Battle of Actium. Octavius Cæsar

B.C.

defeats Marc Antony and Cleopatra, queen of Egypt.

30 Death of Cleopatra. Egypt is made a Roman province.

28 Octavius takes the title of Augustus; and becomes emperor of Rome.

0 Birth of Christ.

A.D.

14 Death of Augustus Cæsar.

20 Pontius Pilate is made governor of Judæa.

33 Death of Jesus Christ. His resurrection and ascension.

35 Conversion of St. Paul.

41 The disciples of Christ first called Christians at Antioch.

43 Claudius Cæsar makes a successful expedition into Britain.

63 Christianity is supposed by some to have been introduced into Britain about this time.

64 Nero sets fire to Rome, which burns for six days. The first persecution against the Christians then commences.

A.D.

- 70 Siege and destruction of Jerusalem.
- 95 Second persecution against the Christians
- 107 Third persecution.
- 118 Fourth persecution.
- 121 Adrian builds a wall in Britain.
- 130 He rebuilds Jerusalem ; and erects in it a temple to Jupiter.
- 202 Fifth persecution of the Christians.
- 209 A wall built by the Romans across Britain at the Frith of Forth.
- 222 The Goths exact an annual payment from Rome, on the condition of not invading the empire.
- 235 Great confusion prevails ; in the midst of which the sixth persecution of the Christians takes place.
- 250 The seventh persecution commences.
- 257 The eighth persecution.
- 259 The Persians defeat the Emperor Valerian, and take him prisoner.
- 269 Claudius II. conquers the Goths.
- 272 The ninth persecution against the Christians.
- 303 The tenth persecution, which lasted

A.D.

ten years ; and was intended utterly to destroy Christianity.

324 Christianity established as the religion of the Roman empire.

328 The seat of the Roman empire removed from Rome to Constantinople.

364 Division of the empire into Eastern and Western—Constantinople being the metropolis of the former, and Rome of the latter.

THE END.

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